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- The new Mourinho
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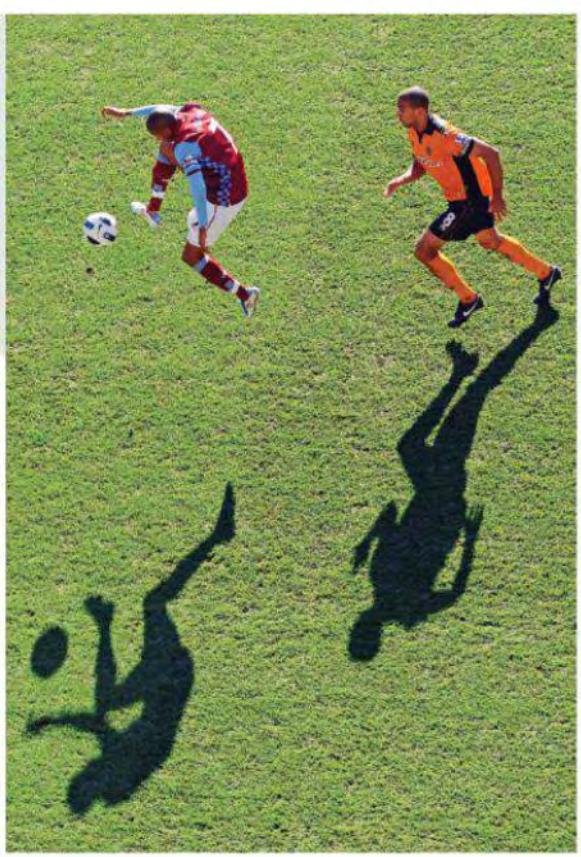
In Pictures

The global game caught on camera

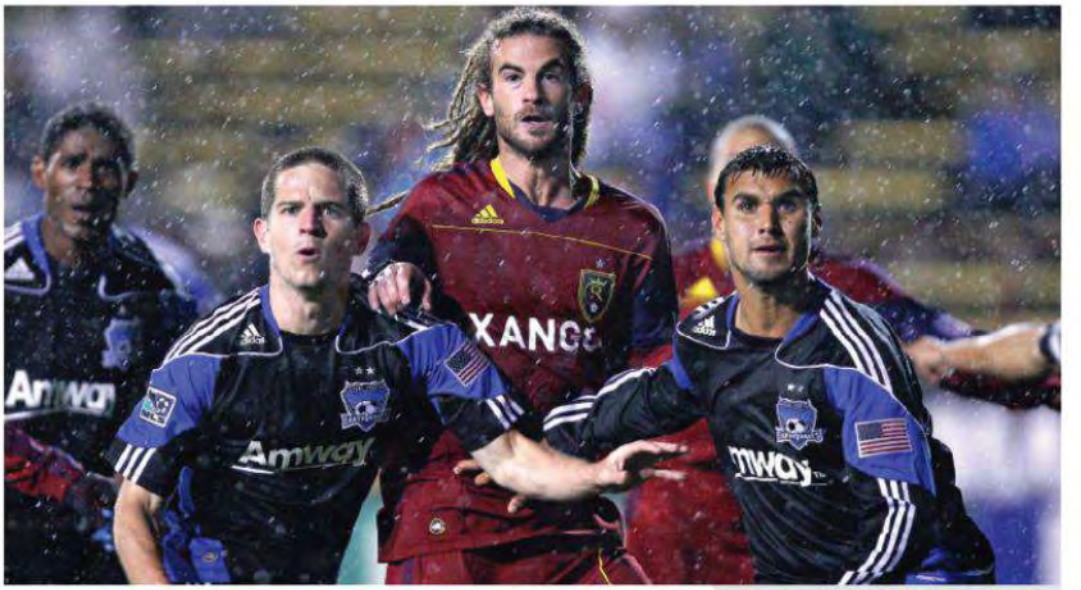
ITALY... Yuto Nagatomo celebrates with his Internazionale team-mates after scoring against Genoa, just a few days before the earthquake and tsunami devastated his homeland of Japan

KUWAIT...players from Iraqi club Duhok celebrate Jassim Suliman's winning goal away to Al Nasr of Kuwait in the AFC Cup

ENGLAND... the shadow of relegation is cast at Villa Park by respective captains Ashley Young of Aston Villa (left) and Karl Henry of Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League



JORDAN...Iran's women's football team prepare to take on Palestine in an Olympic 2012 qualifying match in Zarqa, Jordan



USA...Real Salt Lake's Kyle Beckerman (centre) and San Jose's Sam Cronin (left) and Chris Wondolowski focus their attention on a corner in the Californian rain

SPAIN...Barcelona goalkeeper Victor Valdes celebrates a Lionel Messi goal against Arsenal at Camp Nou

IVORY COAST...young children enjoy a kickabout on a dust pitch in the troubled capital Abidjan

FROM THE EDITOR

By the time you read this, nominations for the FIFA presidential election will have closed with just two candidates, Sepp Blatter and Mohamed Bin Hammam, having put forward their names. For an organisation riddled with problems, accused of corruption and hamstrung by a lack of transparency, the election choice is hugely unedifying. As Brian Glanville puts it on page 18: "Would you rather be shot or hanged?"

Bin Hammam's challenge will be welcomed by some, but the man who masterminded Qatar's heavily financed 2022 World Cup bid is hardly a new broom, having been an insider at FIFA since 1996. In the past he has been disdainfully dismissive of the media's investigation of corruption at FIFA. What has changed in recent weeks, other than the realisation that this will be his only chance of toppling Blatter before Michel Platini is ushered into the job in 2015?

> Bin Hammam will be welcomed by some but he is hardly a new broom, having been an insider at FIFA since 1996

The election will garner many headlines between now and June, but there is plenty happening elsewhere, not least a tight title race in Italy (Napoli club focus , page 60), the new season in Brazil (page 70) and an illuminating interview with Xavi (page 54).

Thanks for all your kind comments about our new look. I welcome your continued feedback and you can contact me directly via Twitter @WorldSoccerEd or via email, gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor

10 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THIS MONTH

1. Mohamed Bin Hammam confirms he will stand against Sepp Blatter for the FIFA presidency ▶ Page 9
2. Botswana qualify for their first African Nations Cup ▶ Page 32
3. Top coaches sacked in Germany ▶ Page 34
4. Inter's revival threatens Milan's title hopes in Italy ▶ Page 42
5. Brisbane Roar win Australia's A-League title ▶ Page 91
6. Arsenal and Bayern Munich crash out of the Champions League ▶ Page 90
7. Olympiakos win the championship in Greece ▶ Page 33
8. IFAB defer decision on video technology until next year ▶ Page 15
9. Palestine played their first competitive match on "home" soil ▶ Page 38
10. Michel Platini re-elected unopposed for a second term as UEFA president ▶ Page 28

BOSNIA

Bosnia face Euro 2012 axe in dispute with FIFA

Last time out...before March's Euro 2012 qualifier against Romania

Bosnia-Herzegovina face the prospect of being kicked out of the Euro 2012 qualifiers after the country's football federation was suspended from international competition by FIFA.

The move follows the failure of the federation to agree to a demand from FIFA and UEFA that they adopt a single federation president.

Because of the complex ethnic and religious make-up of the former Yugoslav republic, the Bosnian federation (NFSBiH) has three presidents, one from each of the key groups: Serbs, Croats and ethnic Muslims.

NFSBiH secretary general Jasmin Bakovic said the federation's problems reflected wider political problems in Bosnia. "We are simply a part of the general society and the NFSBiH is just a mirror image of the state," said Bakovic. "In this country, if you don't meddle with politics, then politics will meddle with you."

Bosnia are due to play Romania on June 3 in their next Euro 2012 qualifying match. That match is now in jeopardy unless a compromise can be reached.

ENGLAND

Kolo Toure faces lengthy drugs ban

Sidelined...Toure

Manchester City and Ivory Coast defender Kolo Toure faces a lengthy spell on the sidelines after failing a drugs test. After he was reported to have tested positive for methylhexaneamine, his former manager at Arsenal, Arsene Wenger, suggested Toure may have taken one of his wife's dietary supplements.

City suspended the player but he could now be banned for up to two years by FIFA.

"When, one day, I write a book, some people are going to end up inside"

Alfio Basile on his resignation as Argentina coach in 2008

"This is an unbelievable disgrace. Fair-play is being trampled on"

Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke on a Mainz goal, scored after they failed to put the ball out for an injured opponent

Challenge... Bin Hammam

FIFA

AFC boss Bin Hammam says he will stand against Blatter

After months of speculation, Mohamed Bin Hammam, the Qatari president of the Asian Football Confederation, confirmed that he will stand against Sepp Blatter for the FIFA presidency.

Bin Hammam, who campaigned for Blatter in his 1998 and 2002 elections, argued that it was time for a change in FIFA's leadership, saying: "Mr Blatter is a very experienced person, he has actually made significant contributions towards the development of the game worldwide. The world knows him very well. But the time now is for new faces, new blood, new air to FIFA."

Bin Hammam plans to hand powers back to the regional confederations and replace FIFA's executive committee with an expanded board of 40 members. He also proposes doubling the financial assistance given to each member association, from the current $250,000 to half a million dollars each.

"I believe my chances are 50-50," added Bin Hammam. "Sepp Blatter is an experienced person, he has made a significant contribution to football worldwide but I believe there is a time limit for everything."

The election, decided by votes from FIFA's 208 federations, takes place at the world governing body's annual Congress in Zurich on May 31 and June 1.

HEROES & VILLAINS

ROGERIO CENI

The Sao Paulo goalkeeper became the first keeper to score 100 career goals when he scored from a free-kick against Corinthians in a state championship game.

HOVHANNES TAHMAZYAN

The 41-year-old Shirak defender has featured in every season of top-flight football in Armenia since the country's independence 20 years ago.

FRANCESCO TOTTI

The Roma captain scored twice against Fiorentina to take his Serie A goal tally to 201 – four goals behind fifth-placed Roberto Baggio in the list of all-time top scorers.

DAVID VILLA

The Barcelona forward became Spain's all-time top goalscorer after scoring twice against the Czech Republic to take his tally to 46 and overtake Raul's 44.

BRANDAO

The Brazilian striker was loaned by Marseille to Cruzeiro after he was held for questioning for two days by French police after being accused of rape by a 23-year-old woman.

ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC

The Swede was banned for three matches, including the Milan derby, for punching Bari's Marco Rossi in the stomach.

GIORGI DEMETRADZE

The former Georgia striker was sentenced to six years in prison after being found guilty of extortion and involvement in illegal betting.

STEFAN RADU

The Lazio midfielder received a three-match ban after butting Roma midfielder Fabio Simplicio right in front of the referee.

"He stands for continuity, homegrown talent, passion and everything else that's good about football"

Hamburg supremo Bernd Hoffmann applauds his club's appointment of Frank Arnesen (right) as director of sport

SPAIN

Rivals forget differences to wish cancer patient Abidal well

Rivalry was set aside for once. Real Madrid had just defeated Lyon to clinch their first Champions league quarter-final place in seven years when the players trooped to the edge of the pitch, pulled on T-shirts and stood before their fans, displaying the words "Animo Abidal" – best wishes to Eric Abidal, the Barcelona full-back who had been diagnosed as having a tumour on his liver. The Santiago Bernabeu applauded.

UEFA had refused to allow Madrid and Lyon – Abidal's former club – to wear the T-shirts prior to the game. Now, both did so after the match instead. And it was not an isolated gesture. All over Spain, teams showed their support with T-shirts and banners. In Barcelona's first home game after the news broke, fans applauded throughout the twenty-second minute of the match. Abidal's shirt number is 22.

News of Abidal's condition broke in the middle of March, completely out of the blue. A tumour had been discovered on his liver. There was, it appeared, a risk that it might be malignant. Barcelona midfielder Xavi described it as the most difficult situation he had ever been through as a player, saying that the Barca dressing room was shattered. Goalkeeper Victor Valdes said that he simply did not know how to react.

The following day, the 31-year-old came into see his team-mates before going under the knife. He was remarkably chirpy and, as he departed, he gave waiting photographers a thumbs up.

"He has cheered us up more than we have cheered him up," said Xavi.

Looking on the bright side, staying positive, Abidal told his team-mates that he hoped to be back for the Champions league Final.

On March 17, he was taken into the Barnaclinic hospital where surgery was performed to remove the tumour and a biopsy carried out. According to the hospital, the intervention was successful. Although the full details of the biopsy have not been released, it is understood that there are few concerns now about the onset of cancer. The club described the process as "satisfactory, with no unforeseen complications".

A club statement said: "During the operation, which lasted for approximately three hours, the medical team removed the tumour through laparoscopic surgery without any complications. Depending on his progress, the player could be allowed to leave hospital within a week."

Having feared the worst, the prognosis was positive and he was out in six days.

Abidal will rest and recuperate at home for four weeks. He then hopes to resume light training. The likelihood is that the defender – who has played superbly well this campaign, becoming an undisputed starter at left- or centre-back – will miss the rest of the season. And for once, that sounded like very good news indeed.

Sid Lowe

Regular...Abidal had played 34 games for Barcelona this season

Support...Real Madrid's Marcelo

"It's easy to compare the game in Spain and Italy. In Spain it's spectacle and victory, while in Italy all that matters is you win, win, win"

Samuel Eto'o draws on his experience of La Liga and Serie A

REPORTS

we couldn't make up

1 **Slobodan Pavkovic, the Serbian technical director of the Singapore FA, has apologised for walking on to the pitch and pushing the referee during a league match.**

Pavkovic, who is also coach of S.League side Young Lions, was sent off for manhandling referee Sukhbir Singh in a match against Geylang United.

"I deeply regret my actions and I fully accept the punishment meted out by FAS," said Pavkovic, who was banned from the touchline for the rest of the season and fined £6,230.

2 **Colombian authorities say they are mystified as to how fans of top-division side Cucuta managed to smuggle a coffin containing a dead supporter into the ground.**

The coffin was reported to have contained the body of 17-year-old Cristopher Sanguino, a Cucuta supporter who had been shot dead while playing football in his local park.

The coffin was carried on to the terraces midway through the second half of the match against Envigado.

3 **Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov scored twice and also missed two penalties in an exhibition game between a Chechen team and a squad of former Brazil stars, including 1994 World Cup-winners Romario and Dunga.**

Kadyrov has invested heavily in football recently, with Ruud Gullit hired as coach of local side Terek Grozny, although the Brazilians insist they played for free. Instead, a donation was made to a fund for victims of recent flooding in Rio de Janeiro.

BRAZIL

Troubled Adriano heads home again

Adriano is the latest big-name player to head back to Brazil after he signed for Corinthians.

The controversial striker left Roma under a cloud when the Italian club opted to tear up his contract just seven months into a three-year deal.

He failed to find the form of his previous spell in Serie A with Internazionale and Parma, and was dogged by off-pitch difficulties. He was late back for training after spending several weeks in Brazil recovering from a broken arm and also had his driving licence suspended for refusing to take a breathalyser test.

However, the 29-year-old aims to reproduce the scoring touch that helped Flamengo to the 2010 Brazilian title, claiming: "Corinthians won't regret it, I'm a fighting player.

"I'm not going there to create trouble, but to score goals."

He's back...Adriano

WINNERS

BORIS MIHAYLOV

The former Bulgaria goalkeeper, now president of the Bulgarian FA, was elected to UEFA's executive committee.

JOACHIM LOW

The Germany coach signed a two-year extension that will keep him in his post until the end of the 2014 World Cup.

STOKE CITY

The Premier League side reached their first FA Cup semi-final for 39 years when they beat West Ham United 2-1.

AARON MOKOENA

South Africa's 2010 World Cup captain, who has not featured for Portsmouth in recent months, was dropped from the national squad to face Egypt in an African Nations Cup qualifier.

LIVERPOOL

Kenny Dalglish's side were knocked out of the Europa League by Braga and look unlikely to qualify for Europe next season.

BAYERN MUNICH

The German champions conceded two second-half goals to Internazionale to crash out of the Champions League. This followed defeat in the German Cup semi-final to Schalke.

LOSERS

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"I wasn't surprised Barcelona put out Arsenal. After all, Wenger's team really does not know how to defend"

Ex-Barca star and European Player of the Year in 1960, Luis Suarez hits the nail on the head

SWEDEN

Swedish part-timer tackles football's last taboo

Anton Hysen appears an unlikely candidate to break one of football's last taboos. But the 20-year-old midfielder, who plays for part-timers Utsiktens in Sweden's fourth tier, has become a global sensation since revealing he is gay in an interview with Swedish magazine *Offside*.

"Until now only my family and friends have known about my sexuality – well I think so, at least," says Hysen. "I might not play in the top league, but I want to prove that there is no big deal if I'm a footballer and also gay."

Hysen is the first player to reveal he is gay since Justin Fashanu in 1990. Fashanu was disowned by relatives, including brother John and many colleagues, and committed suicide in 1998.

Hysen admitted he has a far more sympathetic circle of family and friends. His father, the former Liverpool and Sweden defender Glenn Hysen, is a coach at Utsiktens and team-mates have been very supportive.

"I have had just one letter from a fan who says he won't come and watch the team any more," adds Hysen Jnr. "One of my team-mates has offered to beat him up for me but I said 'leave it'."

Ironically, his father attracted controversy in 2007 when he addressed Stockholm's Gay Pride festival. He had previously been labelled "the ugly face of homophobia" after he had been involved in a fight with another man who had tried "to touch him" in the toilets of an airport.

In the news...Hysen

"That was the funniest thing when my dad made that speech," admits Hysen. "When he was talking about 'a 16-year-old who didn't want to come out because he feared what his team-mates would think', that was me. And people thought it strange that he was allowed to speak at the Pride festival, that he was a homophobe and so on. They were so wrong.

"It is completely strange, isn't it? It's all fucked up. Where the hell are all the others? No one is coming out."

Hysen, a former Sweden Under-17 international, was on the books of top-flight club Hacken until 2009 but struggled with injuries. Half-brother Tobias is a Sweden international and a regular at his father's old club, IFK.

He hopes to develop his career but may become better known as a pioneer for gay rights, saying: "You have to teach some homophobic people how to think but I am happy I did it. Everyone asks me if I know any other gay footballers but I don't. I would encourage them to come out and support each other."

RUMOURS we'd like to believe

1 Bayern are scouring the planet for new defensive faces and whispers abound that they are on the trail of Manchester City's Jerome Boateng, Schalke centre-back Benedikt Howedes and Benfica full-back Fabio Coentrao (left). Heading for the door at Bayern is striker Miro Klose, who is being linked with a move to Tottenham Hotspur.

2 New Hamburg director of sport Frank Arnesen is said to be keen on going back to his old club Chelsea and bringing in Ivory Coast forward Salomon Kalou (above).

3 *France Football* suggests Sevilla are homing in on a front-running acquisition from Ligue 1, either Lille wide-man Gervinho or Lorient's Kevin Gameiro.

4 The agent of Napoli's in-form Uruguay striker Edinson Cavani recently went on Italian TV to suggest that Jose Mourinho is sniffing around his client.

5 The sports media in Valencia have been tipped off that Shakhtar Donetsk's impressive Brazilian midfielder Jadson (below) could soon be on his way to the city.

"I adore caviar"

Brazilian survivor Roberto Carlos plumps for a last hurrah in the Russian League with Anzhi Makhachkala, the home of the delicacy

BRAZIL

Racism row mars Neymar's debut in England

Booed... Neymar

The Scottish FA has called on Brazilian teenager Neymar to apologise for accusing supporters of racism after a banana was thrown onto the pitch as the 19-year-old celebrated scoring against Scotland in a friendly at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium.

Neymar, in his first game in England, was the outstanding performer for Brazil as they cruised to a 2-0 victory. The Santos star scored both goals but was booed and heckled by the Tartan Army for his play-acting and feigning injury.

Neymar complained about the abuse after the game, but the banana was later revealed to have been thrown onto the pitch by a German tourist.

Abused... Robert Carlos

"For our fans to be accused of racism is quite a serious issue," said SFA chief executive Stewart Regan. "We feel that it would only be fair to ask for an apology to be issued by the Brazilian association or, ideally, by the player himself."

A week earlier, Roberto Carlos had been subjected to sustained racist abuse by fans of Zenit St Petersburg, who brandished bananas on his Russian league debut for Anzhi Makhachkala.

David CONN

AT THE HEART OF THE GAME

Personal profit from public funds: West Ham are taking the City route

In a law court in Dubai, two men are fighting over the £150million which was reaped from the 2008 sale of Manchester City. That was the extraordinary price paid for City by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi which delivered almost £130m profit to the outgoing owner, Thaksin Shinawatra, who had bought City for £21.5m a year earlier.

Thaksin is suing his Dubai-based lawyer, claiming he paid over the £150m for safekeeping and alleging the lawyer, who denies the charges, embezzled £60m of that money, and tried to buy a Bombardier Global Express XRS aeroplane, allegedly with forged documents.

As that astonishing case continues in Dubai, it sends a pungent lesson back to east Manchester – and to east London too, where the stadium to host the 2012 Olympic Games has just been completed at a cost of £490m.

Both the Eastlands stadium, built for the 2002 Commonwealth Games and then handed to City, and the Stratford stadium, which will go to West Ham United after next year's Olympics, were built entirely with public and Lottery money.

In the most impoverished part of generally poor Manchester, £110m of Lottery money was spent building the stadium, then Manchester City Council itself spent £22m of local council taxpayers money ripping up the athletics track and converting the stadium for the football club.

City's majority owners at the time were John Wardle and his partner in the JD Sports retail chain, David Makin. Lottery money cannot be used, according to the law, "primarily to make a profit for a private individual or company", and nor can taxpayers or council tax payers money go principally to line private pockets.

Manchester City Council and Sport England, the Lottery-grant-giving body, were scrupulous in ensuring the stadium deal was acceptable in law; their argument was that occupation by a major football club was the only way to ensure the stadium could be maintained afterwards with no further claim on the public purse. City spent £20m to fit it out with restaurants and bars, and pay a small rent, plus a share of all ticket receipts above 32,500 (the former Maine Road capacity). Around £2m has come back on average annually to support the sports facilities in east Manchester.

But building a brand new, 48,000-seat stadium for Manchester City was always going to generate handsome money for the club and make it worth more as an asset to its owners. The council secured its rental agreement, but never introduced any clawback provision if the club's owners sold the club, with the benefit of the new stadium, at a personal profit.

As it turned out, Wardle and Makin overspent backing Kevin Keegan's hit-and-miss judgment and City hobbled into the new stadium debt-laden, before they sold the club to Thaksin, who went on to make a fortune on the back of the new City of Manchester Stadium. Sheikh Mansour's representatives have made it clear the stadium was a key attraction, giving City high-earning potential, and meaning Mansour could move straight onto the fun of signing expensive players, not spend time with the headaches of a stadium project.

> The publicly funded stadium in Stratford promises the windfall of a lifetime

By the council and Sport England handing City their dream move from Maine Road without a clawback means Thaksin, as revealed categorically in a Dubai court, made a £130m profit.

The government and Mayor of London have decided that after the 2012 Olympics, the publicly funded stadium in Stratford will be handed to West Ham. That promises the windfall of a lifetime for Hammers' owners David Gold and David Sullivan.

The Olympic Park Legacy Company, entrusted with securing the best deal for the public, is negotiating the lease. There is no talk of a clawback for a time when Gold and Sullivan, or any subsequent owners, sell West Ham at a profit. WS

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"Should anyone be shocked that we lost to Real? They make in one match 25 per cent of our yearly income"

Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas cannot hide his sense of hopelessness in the wake of his team's Champions League exit at the Bernabeu

Recovering... Menotti

ARGENTINA

"*El Flaco*" recovering after lung operation

One of Argentina's most important coaches – and most famous smokers – Cesar Luis Menotti, was recovering in hospital in Buenos Aires after undergoing emergency surgery on a lung condition.

A small growth was removed from the right lung of the 72-year-old Menotti, whose last job was as sporting technical director of Independiente.

Atletico Madrid forward Sergio Aguero, who played at Independiente under the chain-smoking Menotti, was one of the many former players who sent messages of support.

Menotti, nicknamed "*El Flaco*" (the thin one) and coach of Argentina's 1978 World Cup-winning side, has long been celebrated by his supporters in Argentina as a left-wing intellectual who opposed the country's ruling military junta by his supporters.

GOALS we'd like to see again

To see clips of these goals, visit **www.worldsoccer.com**

1 JUNINHO PERNAMBUCANO
AL GHARAFA v AL RAYYAN
The 36-year-old former Brazil international proves that he can still take a cracking free-kick with this dipping effort in the Qatari Stars League.

2 ABDELKADER GHEZZAL
BARI v FIORENTINA
The Algeria striker curls the ball into the top corner with the outside of his boot.

3 DENNIS ROMMEDAHL
DENMARK v NORWAY
A sweet first-time volley into the top corner from fully 25 yards.

4 ALEXIS SANCHEZ
UDINESE v PALERMO
A blistering counter-attack is completed by a step-over to dummy the goalkeeper before he slots home.

5 ELANO
SANTOS v COLO COLO
A swerving free-kick from more than 40 yards.

6 CLAUDIO RIANO
TALLERES v ALUMNI
A neat piece of ball-juggling precedes a spectacular overhead kick from the edge of the penalty area.

PORTUGAL

Anti-doping ban on Queiroz overturned

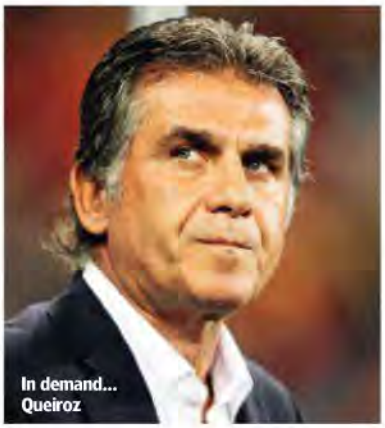
Former Portugal coach Carlos Queiroz has had his six-month ban for allegedly disrupting an anti-doping test before last year's World Cup lifted on appeal.

The Portuguese anti-doping authority handed down the suspension last August after an incident involving three of their doping control officers at the Portugal training camp in May.

Queiroz was then sacked by Portugal in September, following a defeat by Norway, while he was serving his ban.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that Queiroz, formerly coach of Real Madrid and assistant at Manchester United, had not "disturbed the sample collection process or the work of the anti-doping officers".

Queiroz has recently been linked to national jobs in Iran and Saudi Arabia.



In demand... Queiroz

"That was a dagger through the heart"

Karl-Heinz Rummenigge on Inter's comeback against Bayern Munich

OBITUARIES

Ladislav Novak (1931-2011)
Captain of the Czechoslovakia side that lost to Brazil in the 1962 World Cup Final, he skippered his country in 71 of his 75 games between 1952 and 1966.

Jan Popluhar (1935-2011)
A pivotal member of the Czechoslovakia team that reached the 1962 World Cup Final, the defender was voted Slovakia's best player of the 20th century as part of UEFA's golden jubilee celebrations.

Patrick Doeplah (1990-2011)
The Liberia midfielder, who played his club football for Israeli second-tier side Hapoel Kfar Saba, was found dead in his hotel room while attending an Olympic training camp in his homeland.

Top scorer... Escudero

Adrian Escudero (1927-2011)
Atletico Madrid's all-time leading scorer, he won consecutive La Liga titles in 1950 and 1951, and played three times for Spain, scoring once.

Paul GARDNER

THE WORLDWIDE VIEW

FIFA election will not tackle the issues that really matter

So I'm supposed to be all excited and concerned about the FIFA presidential battle? Well, deplorably no doubt, I have to report that I don't give a flying you-know-what about it, for this reason: I don't think it's going to change anything that really matters for the sport itself.

All the talk I've seen so far – the pledges and the promises, and the vows and the guarantees, from the two main candidates, Sepp Blatter and Mohamed Bin Hammam – leaves me stone cold.

I really don't care if the FIFA Executive Committee has 24 or 240 members. I'm all for more transparency, but so are both candidates. Changes in the World Cup bidding process? Oh yes, I'm in favour of that. But then who isn't?

You get the trend. These are all administrative matters, organisational procedures...all of them, as far as I can see, designed to make FIFA look good, designed by the FIFA grey suits to make themselves look good.

And the sport? The supposed raison d'etre, the very life blood of FIFA, the activity that creates all this incredible worldwide excitement – to say nothing of all that wealth – the goals and the dribbles and the tackles, the offsides, the referees and all that stuff. Is anyone at FIFA thinking about that?

Were the suits satisfied with what went on - on the field - in South Africa last year? More pointedly, how many of the suits are qualified, or interested enough, to have any cogent opinions on the current state of the game?

There is a lovely old Spanish proverb - Sancho Panza was reminded of it in Don Quixote - about what happens to people who assume high office: "Manners change when honours come." FIFA-wise, take that to mean that the more anyone becomes involved in soccer administration, the less time there is to attend or watch games.

Inevitably the suits are divorced from the grass-roots game once they are seduced by smooth limousines and large FIFA allowances. So a self-serving aim of preserving FIFA, making it work more efficiently and profitably, becomes the name of the game for the suits.

Which would be fine if we could be sure that all that efficiency were devoted to encouraging and maintaining the best on-field performances the sport can offer.

But that is so obviously not true. If FIFA's attitude to the game is wrong, then a perfectly functioning FIFA only makes matters worse. That is how I see things - because FIFA has no attitude to the game itself. Blatter came close to suggesting that something needed to be done about this when he announced, just before Bin Hammam made his challenge, the creation of Task Force Football 2014 "to make our game even more attractive". But that idea will no doubt take a back seat while the organisational matters take precedence during the election.

> In terms of FIFA, the more anyone becomes involved in soccer administration, the less time there is to attend or watch games

If there is one body that should look after the game, it is the International Board (IFAB), whose members evidently pride themselves on being "the guardians of the game". But that is not so. They act as the guardians of the rules, their precious laws. That is not the same thing. In limiting itself to the pedantry of rule wording, IFAB has become a joke. Look at its recent meeting: rulings on undershorts and dogs on the field and the placing of advertising boards - but when the major issue of goal-line technology came up, a decision was promptly postponed.

To replace the archaic IFAB there should be a much more dynamic, much more representative body that keeps the sport under constant assessment. Not an ephemeral task force, but a body with the authority to make sure we get the best out of this wonderful sport. WS

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"Don't ask me why he suspended me. He didn't have the guts to tell me to my face"

Zvjezdan Misimovic (right) on coach Gheorghe Hagi

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

IN

EUROPE

Sacked by Schalke, **FELIX MAGATH** was back at his former club Wolfsburg within days as just one of several coaching changes in the Bundesliga (see *Dispatches*, page 34).

ALBERTO CAVASIN was appointed Sampdoria coach until the end of the season.

SORIN CARTU, the CFR Cluj coach who was dismissed after he destroyed the subs' bench during a Champions League defeat against Basle last year, is now in charge of Steaua Bucharest.

Former Turkey midfielder **TAYFUR HAVUTCU** has taken charge of Besiktas until the end of the season.

JENS LEHMANN has rejoined Arsenal until the end of the season. The 41-year-old, who made 199 appearances for the Gunners, came out of retirement after a goalkeeping injury crisis at the club.

Chelsea agreed a deal to sign Brazilian teenager **LUCAS PIAZON** from Sao Paulo, but will have to wait for his 18th birthday in January 2012 before he can move to Stamford Bridge.

MIXU PAATELAINEN resigned as boss of Scottish side Kilmarnock to become coach of Finland.

Former Sebia boss **MIROSLAV DJUKIC** is the new coach of La Liga's bottom club Hercules. The 45-year-old is best remembered in Spain for missing a penalty on the final day of the 1993-94 season which would have clinched a first-ever title for for his side Deportivo La Coruna.

Nordsjaelland coach **MORTEN WIEGHORST** will replace Keld Bordinggaard as Denmark Under-21 coach after this summer's European Under-21 Championship finals.

Former Northern Ireland defender **PAT McGIBBON** has replaced sacked former boss Gerry Flynn as manager of bottom of the table Newry City until the end of the season.

SOUTH AMERICA

LUIS FABIANO rejoined former club Sao Paulo in Brazil from Spain's Sevilla for £6.5m.

Brazilian forward **GUILHERME** returned home to join Atletico Mineiro, for a fee of around £5m, from Ukraine's Europa League quarter-finalists Dynamo Kyiv.

CONCACAF

Colombian coach **LUIS SUAREZ**, who has taken charge of the Honduras national team, began his tenure with a 4-0 defeat against South Korea in Seoul.

Veteran German coach **OTTO PFISTER** has taken control of Trinidad & Tobago's national side. The 73-year-old led Saudi Arabia in the 1998 World Cup and Togo at the 2006 finals.

AFRICA

SAMI TRABELSI was appointed Tunisia's third national coach in as many months, replacing Ammar Souyah, who left without taking charge of a game. Souyah, who

quit in the wake of the Tunisian uprising, replaced Faouzi Benzarti who was appointed in January but left soon after.

Former international defender **NORMAN MAPEZA** has been named Zimbabwe coach for a third time, taking over from Belgium's Tom Saintfiet, who was given the job in September but then ordered out of the country by the immigration authorities two weeks later when he arrived without a work permit.

German coach **ERNST MIDDENDORP,** who was relieved of his duties at Maritzburg United, was put in charge of fellow South African Premier Soccer League strugglers Golden Arrows 10 days later.

IAN PALMER took over as coach of Maritzburg United, who were third from bottom of the South African Premier League.

ASIA

Frenchman **CLAUDE LE ROY** has been put in charge of Syria's national team.

Former Qatar coach **BRUNO METSU** has taken charge of the country's AFC Champions League hopefuls Al Gharafa.

Boussoufa, Tardelli and Misimovic all join Russia's foreign legion

Russian Premier League side Anzhi Makhachkala signed Morocco striker Mbark Boussoufa (left) from Belgium's Anderlecht for £10million and Brazil forward Diego Tardelli from Atletico Mineiro for £6.5m.

Dynamo Moscow signed Bosnia-Herzegovina midfielder Zvjezdan Misimovic from Galatasaray for £4.3m.

"Each player will be called on the landline at 10pm and whoever is not at home will be fined. I don't want piano, players, I want players who carry the piano"

Steaua Bucharest owner Gigi Becali lays down the law

Transfers, sackings and loans

OUT

EUROPE

Sampdoria sacked coach **DOMENICO DI CARLO** after a 3-2 defeat at home to fellow strugglers Cesena left them just three points above the Serie A relegation zone.

German coach **BERND SCHUSTER** quit Turkish club Besiktas after winning just one of his last seven games.

Hercules sacked coach **ESTEBAN VIGO** after a 4-0 defeat at home to Osasuna put them bottom of La Liga.

Zenit St Petersburg forward **DANKO LAZOVIC** announced his retirement from international football. The 27-year-old scored 11 goals in 43 games for Serbia.

MARIUS LACATUS, who had only been in charge of the club since September, resigned as Steaua Bucharest coach following their 3-0 home defeat by Brasov.

Nancy coach **PABLO CORREA** will leave the Ligue 1 club at the end of the season. The Uruguayan, whose contract was set to run until 2012, said: "I think the club needs something else and I cannot give this because it is difficult to motivate all the time."

Polonia Warsaw sacked Dutch coach **THEO BOS** with the side sitting 11th in the 16-team Polish first division after 18 matches.

MANUEL FERNANDES left Vitoria Setubal by mutual consent after the team slid to third from bottom in the Portuguese Liga.

SVEN VERDONCK, a Belgian playing for Dutch second-division club Fortuna Sittard, received a worldwide ban after he tested positive for anabolic steroid stanozolol.

SOUTH AMERICA

MURICY RAMALHO quit as coach of Fluminense following a 0-0 draw against rivals Flamengo in the Rio de Janeiro state championship.

Botafogo coach **JOEL SANTANA** quit after criticism from supporters following a derby defeat against Vasco da Gama.

LEONARDO MADELON resigned as Quilmes coach after a fourth successive Argentinian clausura defeat left his side in danger of relegation.

AFRICA

THIERRY FROGER resigned as coach of Togo citing "personal reasons".

Serbian coach **ZORAN FILIPOVIC** became the eighth top-flight boss in South Africa to lose his job when he was sacked by Golden Arrows after a nine-match winless run.

ASIA

Qatar's Al Gharafa replaced Brazilian coach **CAIO JUNIOR** following poor domestic form.

HENRIQUE CALISTO resigned as coach of Vietnam.

Al Karamah coach **MOHAMED KWID** became the first casualty of this year's AFC Cup when he resigned following the Syrian club's 2-2 draw with Al Arouba of Oman.

Melbourne Victory, who lost their opening Champions League match to Japan's Gamba Osaka 5-1, sacked coach **ERNIE MERRICK**, who had led the team to two A-League championships.

Australia Under-20 striker **MATTHEW LECKIE** has joined Germany's Borussia Monchengladbach from Adelaide United.

Hagi leaves Galatasaray for second time

Gheorghe Hagi was sacked by Galatasaray just five months into his second spell at the club. He left with the side 11th in the Turkish league, some 27 points behind leaders Fenerbahce.

The 46-year-old, who won 125 caps and appeared in thee World Cups for Romania, won the UEFA Cup as a player with Gala. He first coached the side from 2004 to 2005, and then returned to replace Frank Rijkaard in October last year.

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Brian GLANVILLE

THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

The simple truth is that captains don't matter

Is it sacrilege to view the recent kerfuffle over the England captaincy as the merest storm in a teacup? What in the last analysis does it matter whether John Terry or Rio Ferdinand, each with his tarnished escutcheon, skippers England?

You might have thought that the salient reason for keeping Terry out of the picture was not so much what you might call his "extra curricular" exploits, but the fact that he tried to lead a mutiny in South Africa against Fabio Capello.

As for Ferdinand, who wouldn't even have been fit to play in the latest round of England games in any case, and who has himself had what might be politely termed as "romantic" jaunts abroad, how could he possibly be a candidate for the captaincy after his eight-month suspension for avoiding that drug test?

Cricket captains matter; they set the field and select their bowlers. Football captains, by and large, don't. It's the manager or the coach who decides the tactics and the substitutions. Just now and again you find an inspired and inspirational skipper, such as Danny Blanchflower of Northern Ireland and Tottenham Hotspur. And note that even he was deprived of the role by the then-Spurs manager, the obscure Jimmy Anderson, after he had dared in an FA Cup semi-final lost to Manchester City in 1956 to move his big centre-half, Maurice Norman, into the firing line.

Bobby Moore led England by example, while Billy Wright, a schoolboy hero, was what you might call a company man.

FIFA'S DUBIOUS DILEMMA

Would you prefer to be shot or hanged? Due to stand against the egregious and shameless Sepp Blatter for the presidency of FIFA is none other than Mohamed Bin Hammam, the candidate from...Qatar.

That's right, Qatar, the tiny country with no footballing status and a boiling hot summer climate which, none the less, has been awarded the 2022 World Cup.

Hammam, without a trace of embarrassment or irony, speaks of his wish to make the bidding process more open. "FIFA," he assures us, "is not corrupt but needs to be more transparent". Oh, please. For good or absurd measure, he says: "We belong to the people acting on behalf of them."

The bitter truth is that FIFA is beyond redemption. That the FA have told us that they won't back Blatter is meaningless. As meaningless as Bin Hammam's promise to eliminate that fiasco: FIFA's ethics committee. Just window dressing, alas. But from the moment the serpentine Joao Havelange unseated Stanley Rous as president of FIFA, the die was cast. The game had lost its soul.

Follow my leader... Terry has been reinstated as England captain

> You might have thought the reason to keep Terry out of the picture was that he tried to lead a mutiny against Capello

REVIE REVISITED AND A BIT OF CLOUGH

Two books about the former Leeds United and England manager Don Revie have recently appeared, plus a long and exhaustive interview in a Sunday newspaper with the Earl of Harewood, cousin of the Queen, patron of the arts, especially music, and still the president of Leeds United.

Of the two books, one has the emotive title *Revie Revered and Reviled* and was written by an experienced Yorkshire football journalist. The other is the work of a former senior BBC radio journalist who has never specialised in football and who also writes of Brian Clough – Revie's managerial nemesis and the man who, against all logic and the odds, succeeded him in charge at Elland Road for 44 tempestuous days, having previously and publicly told the Leeds players that they should throw their array of medals into the rubbish bin.

Revie and Clough were born within a few streets of each other in Middlesbrough, where Clough became a high scoring centre-forward. But Revie went to Leicester City in the East Midlands, where he became an inside-right of outstanding qualities, though best remembered for his majestic performance as Manchester City's deep lying centre-forward against Birmingham City at Wembley in the 1956 FA Cup Final.

For Harewood, in an interview which reads like a sustained piece of special pleading, Revie could do no wrong. There can be no doubt that he revitalised Leeds, making them into a team of high skills and sometimes dazzling virtuosity. On the way there, however, were the controversial days in the Second Division, the tales of

attempted bribery and, when his team did first achieve the championship, a reputation for ruthlessness. I well remember standing outside Elland Road with the accomplished Manchester United right-half Pat Crerand, who told me how he loathed playing against Leeds with their policy of cynical disruption.

Harewood would have none of this. "Don resented the notion that Leeds were a dirty team," he argued. "They were tough but not dirty." Nor did he concede that Revie, struggling as England manager, did anything wrong when, with the lie that he was going to watch another international, he deserted his team as it prepared to play Brazil in Rio, instead flew to Dubai to sign a lucrative contract to coach the national team.

All white...Revie, with Billy Bremner and the Leeds team that lost the 1973 FA Cup Final to Sunderland, has been defended by the club president, the Earl of Harewood

This led to a notorious High Court case, where Revie successfully sued the Football Association for money withheld from his contract. He won because the vindictive FA chairman, Harold Thompson, had acted illegally as both judge and jury. The actual judge, Mr Justice Cantley – who had infamously seen to it that the Liberal leader Jeremy Thorpe had escaped unscathed when charged with plotting the murder of a hapless boyfriend – called Revie greedy and dishonest; to Harewood's outrage. If anybody was dishonourable, he insists, it was Thompson. As one who called the trial "a contest between Dracula and the Wolf Man", I would say he was right, but only half right.

As England manager, Revie was suddenly out of his depth, denied the close daily contact with his men he had at Leeds. The England players had no time for his diversions of bingo and carpet bowls. Hopelessly thin-skinned, he'd publicly reply to press criticism where his predecessor Alf Ramsey scornfully ignored it. Once he agreed to a confrontation with myself on BBC radio's popular *Saturday Sports Report* programme, on which I expressed my surprise that he, the manager of England, should want to debate with a mere journalist from a single paper.

Subsequently Revie asked the BBC television commentator, Barry Davies, what he had thought of the debate to which the reply was: "I assume the return will be at Elland Road." WS

THE QUESTION HAUNTING WENGER

Has Arsene Wenger lost his way? Given the time he has been in charge at Arsenal – since 1996 – with his manifold achievements, it would hardly be surprising. After all, Herbert Chapman, the true architect of Arsenal's pre-war transformation and success, was in office for less than nine years.

The fiasco of Camp Nou surely suggested Wenger was failing in judgment. However cynical it may seem to say it, he was arguably helped by the contentious sending-off of Robin Van Persie by a deluded Swiss referee in Massimo Busacca because this suddenly gave Wenger a rationale and an excuse, however invalid, for his team's abject failure.

He may have resented the subsequent surprise of Xavi and Sergio Busquets at Arsenal's negative approach but the fact remains the Gunners couldn't contrive a single strike on goal.

From the outset it was all too clear that Wenger was giving hostages to fortune, inexplicably and disastrously pitching Cesc Fabregas into the fray when he was all too obviously not fit, giving away a vital goal with a senseless backheel.

One of the supreme ironies, and surprises, was that when Manuel Almunia, discarded after fluctuating form, appeared as a substitute goalkeeper, he excelled, as he did the following weekend at Old Trafford. It was just too good to last and he went on to gift West Bromwich Albion a goal – watched by none other than his resentful rival, the 41-year-old German, Jens Lehmann, illustrating perhaps the word *schadenfreude*, meaning delight in the misfortunes of others.

Major problem...Wenger

The volatile Lehmann, called back to Arsenal in some desperation by Wenger, could always be majestic or disastrous.

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FIFA's cash

bonanza

This year's FIFA presidential election will take place amid the backdrop of an unprecedented financial windfall being shared among the FIFA "family". Gavin Hamilton and Keir Radnedge report

The World Cup is the gift that keeps on giving for FIFA. The world governing body's most recent accounts revealed a record surplus of $631million (£394m) for the four-year cycle from 2007 to 2011, a 59 per cent increase on the revenues generated during the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

The World Cup now provides 90 per cent of FIFA's income and the better-than-expected results from 2010 World Cup ticket sales and commercial deals mean that FIFA is sitting on a bumper surplus of $1.28billion (£800m).

That is the comfortable financial position that FIFA finds itself in ahead of a potentially tumultuous presidential election between the incumbent, Sepp Blatter, and the challenger, his former ally Mohamed Bin Hammam.

And how the South African World Cup spoils are divided – or are seen to be divided – will be a major factor in determining the outcome.

Blatter has been able to offer each of FIFA's 208 member federations an extraordinary payment of $550,000 (£343,750). In addition, each regional confederation has received $5m (£3.125m).

Blatter's message is that they have never had it so good, although Bin Hammam is offering to double future payments from FIFA's Financial Assistance Programme. That feeling of prosperity extends to the FIFA executive committee which – it appears – has been one of the major beneficiaries of FIFA's World Cup windfall.

Tucked away in FIFA's latest accounts, on page 104 of the report, just before the auditors' sign-off, is a brief paragraph, entitled "key management personnel",

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which reveals that in 2010, $32.6m (£20.11m) was paid to "members of the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the FIFA management, in particular the directors".

The figure represents a substantial increase on the amount paid out to ExCo members in 2009, when they received a total of $20m (£12.4 m)

A written statement to *World Soccer* from FIFA confirmed that "the short-term employee benefits include the total compensation including wages, salaries and variable compensation as well as daily allowances".

The wages and salaries are believed to be those of president Blatter and secretary general Jerome Valcke.

World Soccer understands from sources with intimate knowledge of FIFA's financial structures that the money was shared between ExCo members.

The remuneration was decided by the six members of FIFA'S Finance Committee, who are themselves members of the ExCo.

Helping hand...Blatter and Bin Hammam on a trip to Malaysia

World Soccer understands that ExCo members are paid a six-figure sum as an annual "honorarium". Such payments are made by non-profit seeking organisations like FIFA – which enjoys tax-free status – to people who have performed valuable work on its behalf.

The ExCo members who were approached by *World Soccer* all declined to discuss whether they received a bonus – "variable compensation" – in addition to their annual tax-free stipend and expense allowances.

If the sum of $32m were divided equally among the 24 members of the committee and secretary general Valcke, a non-voting member of the ExCo, then each would have received $1.28m (£790,000).

In addition, the report disclosed that the "directors" also received $1.9m (£1.18m) in pension contributions.

Elsewhere in the report, FIFA disclosed that $65.28m (£40.49m) was paid in salaries to 387 employees in 2010, making an average salary of $168,682 (£105,086), a 22.7 per cent increase on the previous year.

A FIFA spokesman declined to give any further details, saying "FIFA complies with the Swiss requirements regarding internal controls...as is the case for most private companies and organizations, the information related to individual fees or daily allowances is not public".

Goal development programme

Sharing the spoils has been a feature of Blatter's presidency. The Goal development programme, instigated in 1999 following Blatter's elevation to FIFA's top job, has made payments to 193 of FIFA's 208 members. France, England, Spain, Italy and the USA are among the few countries who have not received funds from the programme.

Recently, FIFA approved its 500th Goal project. Each has been funded with a grant of $400,000 (£248,000), a figure that is soon to be increased to $500,000 (£310,000), while many projects have been topped up with payments from FIFA's Financial Assistance Programme.

Many countries have received more than one payment from the programmes. In total 71 countries have received more than $1m (£0.62m).

On Blatter's insistence, much of the Goal programme's funds have been directed towards capital projects, in particular to the construction of so-called "Houses of Football", buildings that double as FA headquarters and technical centres, often with artificial pitches close by.

Apart from the obvious technical and developmental benefits in some of FIFA's poorest members, the Goal scheme has produced huge political benefits for Blatter.

The name of the Samoa Football Federation headquarters tells you all you need to know about the Goal programme. The JS Blatter Football Complex in the capital Apia was built with grants from the Goal programme.

The construction of a football-only complex has given football a huge boost in a country like Samoa, where rugby has previously hogged all available sporting fields. Yet it is clear who the Samoan federation credits with enabling the programme.

> The Goal scheme has produced huge political benefits for Blatter

Blatter has been closely associated with the Goal programme, attending numerous openings and foundation-stone-laying ceremonies since 1999. However, Bin Hammam has also been heavily involved as chairman of the Goal Bureau, the FIFA central committee which has decided the destination of project funds.

Although funds have been directed to some of FIFA's poorest members, the likes of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have also benefitted from the

FAR-REACHING GOALS

How Sepp Blatter took FIFA's Goal programme around the world

Jordan
Blatter and Bin Hammam opened the FA's new HQ. The Goal programme supplied $530,000 and FIFA's financial assistance programme $237,000.

Georgia
The Georgian FA received $900,000 from FIFA to build a technical centre. Two grants of $400,000 paid for an artificial pitch and youth development programmes.

Oman
Last year Blatter visited Muscat, where the Goal programme had paid for the construction of an artificial pitch at the FA's HQ.

India
Blatter opened the new football federation HQ. The building was paid for by the Goal programme and FIFA's financial assistance programme.

Myanmar
Bin Hammam opened a national training centre in May 2003. The local FA received funds totalling $1.638m from FIFA.

Europe
93
completed projects

Asia
124
completed projects

Africa
143
completed projects

Oceania
36
completed projects

Ivory Coast
Funds totalling $1.2m from FIFA enabled the construction of a national training centre. Blatter and Bin Hammam were present at the opening.

Ghana
Grants totalling $974,000 from FIFA enabled the Ghanaian federation to build a technical centre and brand new FA headquarters.

Malaysia
Blatter and Bin Hammam were both present to open an academy at the FA HQ, where artificial pitches were paid for by the Goal programme.

Vietnam
Bin Hammam opened the new offices of the Vietnamese FA. FIFA funds totalling $1.2m also helped the FA construct a national training centre.

programme. In addition, European nations such as Germany and Denmark have received funds from the Goal programme to help finance items such as IT systems.

One of the biggest criticisms of the Goal programme has been FIFA's failure to demand audited accounts for completed projects. Considerable power has been devolved to regional development officers, who have played a major role in drawing up budgets and awarding contracts for individual projects. That has given considerable influence to the likes of Darryl Warner, son of CONCACAF president Jack Warner and the development officer for the Caribbean and Central American region.

In Swaziland, the Goal programme paid for a new FA headquarters – which was then promptly rented out to local businesses to provide FA officials with a regular source of income.

For Blatter, the Goal programme has provided tangible benefits for FIFA members – and long-term political support for his presidency. As he embarks on the campaign trail over the coming weeks, he will no doubt be reminding federations of the important role that he has played in past, present and – he hopes – future Goal projects.

Some 37 years have passed since a challenger ousted an incumbent FIFA president. That was when Brazil's Joao

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Havelange forced out England's Stanley Rous at FIFA Congress in Frankfurt on the eve of the 1974 World Cup finals.

In case Blatter feels he needs a refresher course in how to win elections and if Bin Hammam thinks he could use a little guidance then both might usefully log on to Amazon and order up a copy of *Jogo Duro*, the remarkable biography of Havelange written by Brazilian journalist Ernesto Rodrigues, which starts with the opening two sentences: "The first person to read this biography was Joao Havelange. He did not like everything he read."

It gets better. The reward for reading on is to find a significant section devoted to exactly how Havelange went about winning his votes. It's a sort of D-I-Y guide to becoming FIFA president.

For one thing, Havelange did not dance about on the fringe of the issue a matter of months ahead of the 1974 showdown. He set his mind on it from a long way out, in 1970 while Brazil were still celebrating their World Cup triumph.

Havelange began from a solid base of proven achievement with three World Cup triumphs during his presidency of the Brazilian sports confederation, the CBF. Nor did he leave Rous under any illusion; he told him, straight out, over lunch in London in 1971.

By then Havelange had gone public at the South American confederation congress. He had also assigned associates with well-honed sports and political contacts in the various continents both to spread the word and identify issues he could weave into an action programme.

Rous was vulnerable on a number of fronts. He was deaf to the clamour for greater recognition from Africa, he did not comprehend his folly in ignoring worldwide antagonism to South African apartheid, and his loyalty to nationalist China (Taiwan) blinded him to the political significance represented by the mainland (then out in the cold).

Movers and shakers... Havelange (fourth from right) and Rous (seventh from right) at the 1974 World Cup

Years later, in a series of interviews for *Jogo Duro*, Havelange told Rodrigues: "I could see in Sir Stanley's eyes that he never believed I was a threat to him."

Delighted Africa

Havelange delighted Africa by promising to expand both the World Cup finals and the executive committee and asserted that FIFA would pay, for the first time, all ExCo members' travel and accommodation costs. He offered the Soviet Union his IOC support for a Moscow Olympics in exchange for a presidential vote.

If the Soviets – who also commanded the other east European votes – had any doubts, these were resolved when Rous committed a blunder of crucial proportions. He expelled the Soviet team from the 1974 World Cup qualifiers for refusing to meet Chile, in a play-off, in Santiago's Estadio Nacional which had been used as a prison camp in the CIA-backed overthrow of Marxist president Salvador Allende.

Simultaneously Havelange was undertaking a punishing world tour spanning more than two years and which took him to Africa, Asia, Oceania, Europe and Central and North America. All this, remember, in the days long before jet travel had become commonplace. Havelange had no compunction about the leaders he met, whether monarchs or murderers. If they could deliver a vote, he wanted it.

A high-up contact in Lufthansa offered the six free flights in his gift to the presidents of the minnow islands of Oceania for FIFA Congress in Frankfurt. Another went to FIFA's office in Zurich and paid, in cash, the outstanding membership dues of 14 African nations; had the fees remained unpaid, they could not have voted.

If the Soviets had any doubts, these were resolved when Rous committed a blunder of crucial proportions

Just before the presidential ballot, Rous and his western European supporters lost a vote on a Middle Eastern proposal, more theoretical than practical then, that FIFA should admit mainland China.

That was the first signal that he was damaged goods.

Havelange, in his pre-ballot speculation, had discounted 30 per cent of promised votes on the basis that they would turn out to be lies. In the event he won the first vote 62 to 58. It was not sufficient but it was enough to turn support his way decisively for the second vote in which a simple majority was enough: 62 to 52.

So began a 24-year reign which ended in Paris in 1998 when Havelange's chief executive, Blatter, defeated the favourite, UEFA president Lennart Johansson.

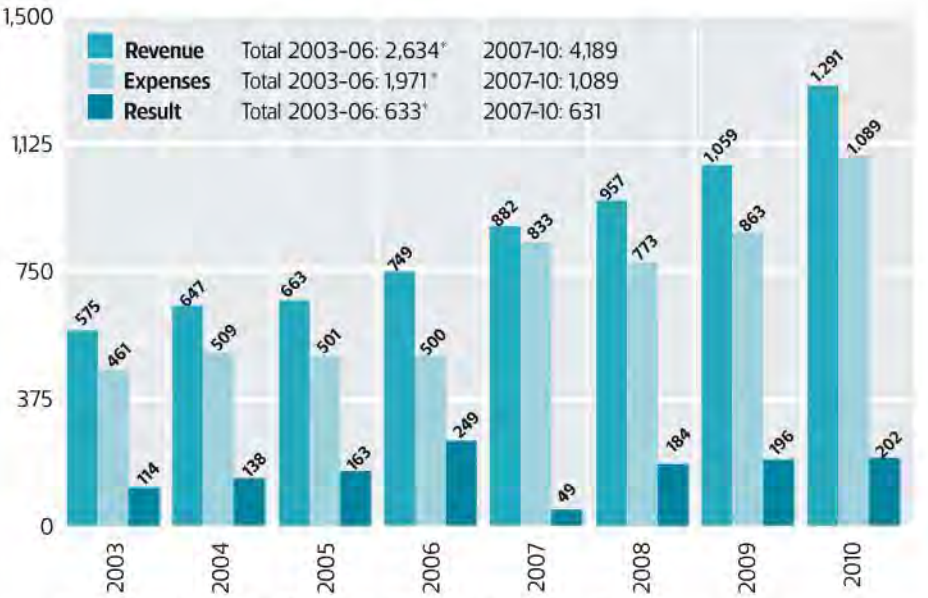
Blatter had Havelange to thank. Before the vote Havelange had summoned many of his old allies and pointed out precisely how many millions their federations had received in FIFA grants during his presidency.

Havelange told them: "Blatter represents continuity against Johansson who represents the unknown."

In other words: "Better the devil you know..." WS

FIFA INCOME 2003-2010

$million



*conversion from Swiss francs to US dollars using the year-end-rates of the respective years

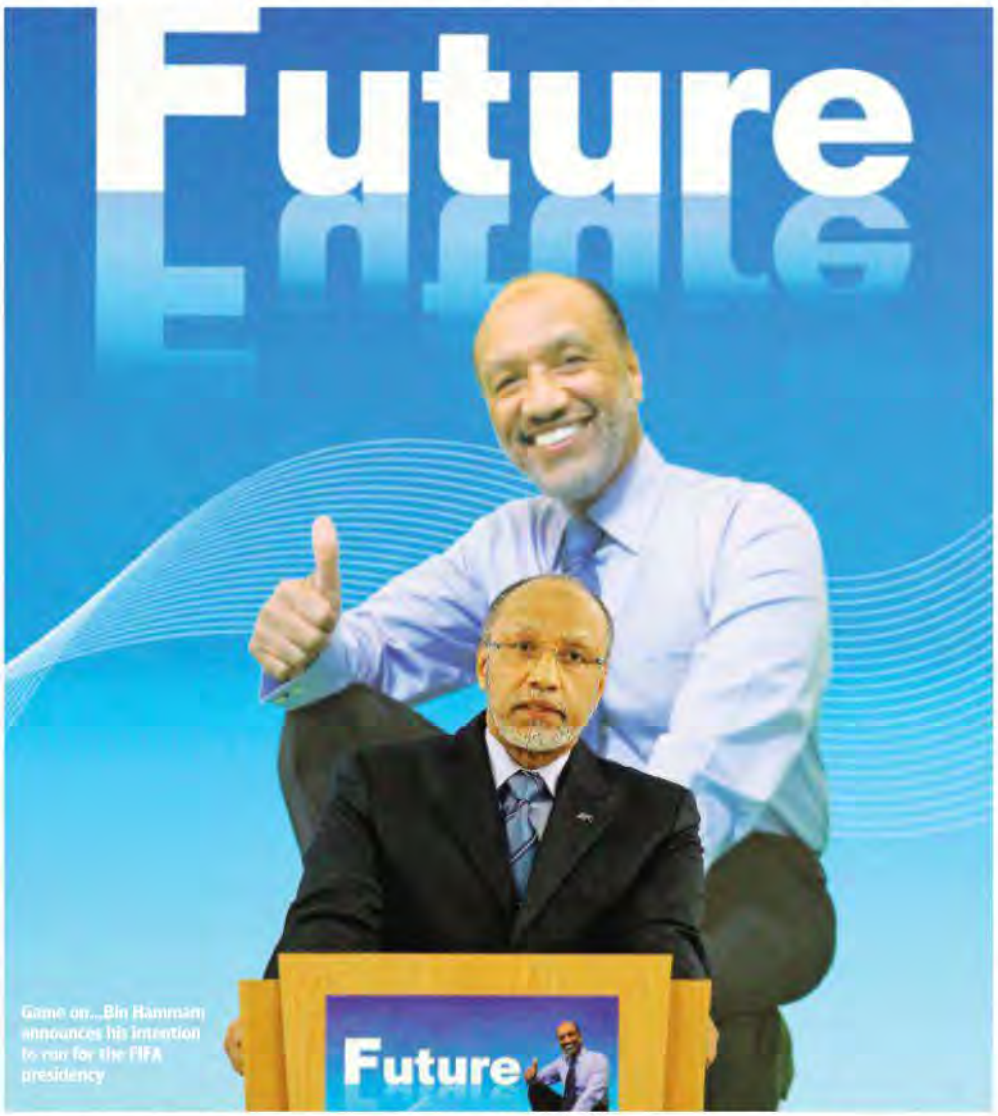
Keir Radnedge

THE INSIDER

The expert view on events off the pitch

Best of enemies

Sepp Blatter faces a serious challenge from Mohamed Bin Hammam – a man who was once his closest backer



Game on...Bin Hammam announces his intention to run for the FIFA presidency

An old cliche about elections is that voters cast their ballot not so much in favour of one candidate or another but rather against them. On those grounds, FIFA president Sepp Blatter faces a tense run-in to congress in Zurich on June 1.

Mohamed Bin Hammam dithered for too long over whether he would seek to become only the ninth president in FIFA's 107 years. Finally, on confirming his candidacy, the Asian confederation president set up the prospect of a potentially tight contest.

The lessons of Joao Havelange's winning campaign back in 1974 remain valid, even 37 years after a challenger last unseated an incumbent president. The Brazilian identified issues which had been allowed to fester among the membership, aligned himself with a wish for change – any sort of change – after two decades of English command (under Arthur Drewry then Stanley Rous) and chased down the votes relentlessly.

The problem for Bin Hammam is in trying to generate credibility for his manifesto in just a matter of months. He can save previous canvassing time, compared with Havelange, by capitalising on the wonders of modern communication, but his potential voters – like the public at large – have grown far more cynical about election promises over the last 40 years.

Is Bin Hammam's challenge premature? Even before Blatter spoke the words at UEFA congress, the next mandate was almost certain to have been his last. Perhaps Bin Hammam is jumping in because he fears that, in 2015, Blatter would assure a shoo-in for Michel Platini.

The Frenchman had been brought into FIFA by Blatter after the 1998 election turned the Swiss from chief executive into president. Platini became presidential counsellor, but soon grew irritated with the limitations of the role and his ability to truly influence anything or anybody.

"If you want power, you need votes," he told me in launching his own campaign to oust Lennart Johansson as UEFA president. Those were the days when Platini discounted any FIFA ambition and even suggested just one term at the head of UEFA might be enough.

But the application of power has changed his mind; he does not now bother denying an interest in going to Zurich. All he has said, in an indirect admission of ambition, is that "I will never stand against Sepp Blatter".

Franz Beckenbauer, often mentioned as a potential president, was never a serious proposition. At 65, he is already 10 years older than Platini and the twice European Footballer of The Year would have to give up his considerable commercial interests just at a time when, by his own admission, he wants to spend more time at home, not less.

> The problem for Bin Hammam is in trying to generate credibility for his manifesto in just a matter of months

So Platini is waiting in the wings – for either 2015 (if anyone believes Blatter) or 2019 (if anyone believes Bin Hammam's insistence that he would serve only two terms if elected). But trust, when it comes to presidential terms, is little more than a five-letter word.

Blatter said originally that he would

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serve only two terms then changed his mind. I asked Blatter, early in his third term, if he remembered his promise? He answered: "Yes, I did say that. But I did not realise that I would spend so much of my time as president making sure I had enough votes."

The challenge facing both Blatter and Bin Hammam is that, while both want some level of change, the core of FIFA's problem, both political and perceptual, is the executive committee composition, drawn from "only" the confederations.

Bin Hammam has offered to increase its numbers from 24 to 41, but this would merely increase the size of the voting blocks, not actually widen the decision-making focus.

Indeed, the entire area of "change" is where Bin Hammam's arguments are at their weakest. He has been a member of the ExCo since 1996, longer than Blatter. If Bin Hammam believed seriously in change why has the world not heard about it before? Why has he remained silent for the past 15 years?

His demand for greater transparency can be attacked on the same grounds. Remember Bin Hammam's indignation last autumn that the media (specifically *The Sunday Times*) should be allowed to publish nasty stories about loyal, hard-working colleagues on the ExCo?

Whatever transparency Bin Hammam believed in last autumn, it was not the transparency FIFA's long-term critics (and an increasing number within Swiss politics) want to see.

Bin Hammam is also promising to throw much more development money around, which must mean cutbacks

> Perhaps a broken election promise drives Bin Hammam. If it's personal as well as political, he is a real danger to Blatter

Top dog...Blatter's reign as head of the FIFA family could be threatened

somewhere. FIFA's own audit pointed out that the world authority is over-dependent on the World Cup which generates around 90 per cent of its income and must tide it over a four-year cycle packed with other championships (youth, women, etc) which all lose money.

What if some quirk of climate change caused severe disruption at the 2014 finals in Brazil? What about the day when a reality check bites back into the vast sums currently sloshing about from television and sponsors?

Not that Blatter, thus far, has offered anything more substantial than Bin Hammam. He proclaims that his "mission" is not finished, but the mission of FIFA and its president to spread the gospel and strengthen the grass roots – whether through projects focused on education or health or sporting ethics – should never be considered finished.

As for "zero tolerance" on corruption this - like Bin Hammam's sudden conversion to goal-line technology - is no serious vote-winner among federations.

So how will the votes split? Blatter will be hoping that:

- The still politically redoubtable Joao Havelange will secure him all 10 South American votes (despite Ricardo Teixeira's anger at Blatter's attack on Brazilian World Cup delays).
- His protective loyalty to Jack Warner for all these years will be rewarded by CONCACAF support
- A majority in Europe will want to keep him in office to hand over seamlessly to Platini, his dauphin, in 2015.
- African countries will acknowledge, with their votes, how he kept his promise to bring them the World Cup.

Blatter may also envision some votes falling his way for no other reason than unease at an apparent Qatari takeover after the 2022 World Cup award.

Bin Hammam, on the other hand, will have three key expectations:

- That his AFC constituency will swing behind him in the hope of seeing a first Asian president, despite the local differences which nearly cost him his FIFA seat last year and also saw him snubbed in favour of Prince Ali in the recent election to the FIFA vice-presidency.
- That an African majority will fall his way in return for his guidance of the Goal programme.
- That a potentially decisive impatience with the apparently eternal Blatter could help him net a shoal of European rebels.

He will also seek a way to woo Warner, and thus CONCACAF, to his cause.

Blatter may regret having put Bin Hammam in charge of the Goal largesse though – who knows? – this may have been Bin Hammam's price for his massive financial and logistical support for Blatter in 1998. Indeed, Bin Hammam may have believed he was putting Blatter into office for just two terms and that he could then accede himself. Perhaps impatience at a broken election promise is the provocation which drives him now.

In that case, if it's personal as well as political, Bin Hammam is a real danger. WS

Plaudits for Platini

Michel Platini's unopposed re-election as UEFA president is good news. His egalitarian instincts may not suit some of European football's big hitters – clubs as well as leagues – but the Frenchman cares about the game and he makes everyone sit up and think about the issues. Top marks so far.

Free run...Platini addresses the UEFA congress after his unopposed re-election

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SID LOWE
in Madrid

The race is on for Liga prize

Madrid look to claw back Barcelona's five-point gap

Luis Aragones always claimed league titles are decided in the final 10 weeks of the season, not the first 28. This is the man who, as Atletico Madrid coach, harangued his players before one Spanish Cup Final by picking up a drinks bottle and, gesturing as furiously as he did graphically, told his players it was time to "stick it up Real Madrid". He is also the national coach who finally ended Raul's international career. This time, however, Real fans can't help but agree with him.

Forget the five-point lead and the 5-0 victory Barcelona have over Madrid, it's the final 10 weeks of this season that will decide the destination of the title, they say. The run-in is set to be fascinating, one that might go to the final day, with Madrid and Barcelona on a knife-edge in a league where draws are the new defeats and a solitary mistake is a catastrophe.

It is also set for a marathon of massive head-to-heads: Real Madrid versus Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu in the league, three days after Real Madrid versus Barcelona at Mestalla in the Final of the Spanish Cup – and possibly barely a week before Real Madrid versus Barcelona in a two-legged Champions League semi-final, which would mean four *clasicos* in little over a fortnight.

As it has been for the last three seasons, the *clasico* is the key to the optimistic Madridista calculations in La Liga. Madrid supporters have looked at the figures and worked out where Barcelona will drop points, gleefully predicting a collapse, foretelling the pressure that will be brought to bear on their greatest rivals, insisting that it is already being felt. Madrid's breath is hot and heavy on Barcelona's necks.

The title race starts now. And although it is one that starts with Barcelona enjoying a healthy lead, Madrid supporters believe they can soon draw level. Barcelona need only to drop a couple more points and Madrid could find themselves on the same total (minus the head-to-head goal difference). And the three points from the Bernabeu, on April 16, have already been totted up in Madrid's favour.

The trouble is, that was the case for the last two seasons as well – and both times Barcelona won comfortably at the home of their rivals. This time, Madrid fans insist, it will be different.

As the phrase has it, Madrid supporters are clinging to the "burning nail" – the Spanish equivalent of clutching at straws, only one that implies faith, belief and hope rather than a lost cause. They grabbed the burning nail in 2007 when Fabio Capello's team were trailing Barcelona and, incredibly, somehow finished the season top of the table. And as Madrid are growing, so Barcelona have become a little less polished, a little slower.

Here's the bad news...

That's the good news for Madrid fans; here's the bad news: it is a lot to ask Barcelona to drop five points and, anyway, the difference is effectively six because Madrid also have to nullify the head-to-head goal difference which currently stands at 5-0 in Barcelona's favour. That's only 10 points fewer than Barcelona dropped in the whole of last season and only two fewer than they have dropped in 29 games already this. It also assumes that Madrid will pick up every point between now and the end of the season, with even Mourinho admitting: "If we lose any games, it's over."

That won't be easy: Madrid's away form has not been especially sparkling of late either – in their last six away games they have dropped points three times, although their results have improved over the last month. In the second half of the season Barcelona have a lead. The fixture list appears to be against them too – although as the season progresses Madrid may find that they have the advantage of facing strong sides who no longer have much to play for.

Assuming that Madrid and Barcelona will win the vast, vast majority of home games – Madrid have won 13 out of 13 at the Bernabeu; Barcelona 11 of 13 at Camp Nou, plus their last nine – it is likely to be the away games that are the key. It is there that Madrid have dropped 13 points, while Barcelona have dropped just four. And, although it does not necessarily work like this, if you had to choose which were the hardest games of the season for Madrid and Barcelona you would say: away at Sevilla, away at Athletic, away at Villarreal, away at Valencia, and away at Espanyol (for Barcelona, certainly).

Madrid fans' optimism was awoken by Barcelona's 1-1 draw at Sevilla, just as the league went into the final 10 weeks. But a 1-1 draw at the Pizjuan is, in truth, not a

Taking their chances... Santander goalkeeper Tono denies Madrid defender Marcelo

MOST RECENT *CLASICOS*

Season and results			Final league placing
2010-11			
Barcelona	5-0	Real Madrid	
2009-10			
Real Madrid	0-2	Barcelona	1st Barcelona
Barcelona	1-0	Real Madrid	2nd Real Madrid
2008-09			
Real Madrid	2-6	Barcelona	1st Barcelona
Barcelona	2-0	Real Madrid	2nd Real Madrid
2007-08			
Real Madrid	4-1	Barcelona	1st Real Madrid
Barcelona	0-1	Real Madrid	3rd Barcelona
2006-07			
Barcelona	3-3	Real Madrid	1st Real Madrid
Real Madrid	2-0	Barcelona	2nd Barcelona
2005-06			
Barcelona	1-1	Real Madrid	1st Barcelona
Real Madrid	0-3	Barcelona	2nd Real Madrid
2004-05			
Real Madrid	4-2	Barcelona	1st Barcelona
Barcelona	3-0	Real Madrid	2nd Real Madrid
2003-04			
Real Madrid	1-2	Barcelona	2nd Barcelona
Barcelona	1-2	Real Madrid	4th Real Madrid

bad result. Madrid still have to go there. In fact, Madrid still have to go to Sevilla, Athletic, Villarreal and Valencia – their final four away matches.

Barcelona, meanwhile, drew in Sevilla, won at Valencia, won at Valencia and still have to face Villarreal. Madrid won 1-0 at Espanyol; Barcelona won 5-0.

There will be seven matches left after the *clasico*. Even if Madrid do win this it may not be enough for them to win the league. It will, though, be enough to ensure a fascinating and extraordinarily tense run-in to the title between two behemoths that now stride across the league with barely disguised disdain for the rest.

Meanwhile, the rest of the league have their own wars to fight, with their own 10-game sprint towards different objectives. Villarreal and Valencia have an 11-point lead over fifth-paced Espanyol that should secure a Champions League slot for the two teams from the east coast. But with direct qualification available only for the team in third, that should not – in theory, at least – prevent a battle to the finish.

> As it has been for the last three seasons, the *clasico* is the key to the optimistic Madridista calculations in La Liga

On the up... Mallorca players celebrate victory over Espanyol

Those looking to get into the Europa League have been given a helping hand by Madrid and Barcelona. Their presence in the Spanish Cup Final and next season's Champions League – already statistically guaranteed – means that the European place offered to the Cup winners will instead be handed to the team that finishes seventh in the league.

Espanyol, Athletic Bilbao and Sevilla currently occupy the three slots but, with Espanyol having sold two key players during the winter window and struggling to maintain their form, Atletico believe that a return to the competition they won last year is not out of the question. They have improved of late – even if they did, inevitably, lose the derby to Real. They have not beaten their rivals in 12 years now.

Astonishingly it may not even be out of the question for Mallorca or Levante to catch a Europa League place. At the start of the campaign Mallorca – who had lost their three best players and their coach, and were in administration and barred from European competition - were expected to be among the relegation candidates. As for Levante, they were a relegation "certainty" as little as 10 games ago. Now, incredibly, they are Spain's third-best side in the second half of the season and safe.

Instead, it is left to Hercules, Almeria and Malaga to occupy the relegation slots, with Zaragoza, Deportivo, Sporting and Santander among those that are looking nervously over their shoulder. If league titles are decided in the final 10 games, so is fate. And that's real pressure. WS

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MARK GLEESON
in Gabrone

Zebras cross over into the big time

Minnows are the first team to reach next year's African finals

With a democratic culture, political stability, strong currency and buoyant economy, Botswana is something of an anomaly on the African continent. Yet the Zebras have become the first team to qualify for next year's African Nations Cup finals in Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, going through their first six qualifiers undefeated.

The 1-0 win away to Chad was their fifth win of the campaign and marks a magical metamorphosis from perennial whipping boys to last-16 finalists. It has been a sudden transformation, with Botswana surfing through on the energy derived from an unexpected win in their opening group game against Tunisia.

Their most experienced player Dipsy Selolwane, who had spells with Vejle in Denmark and at Chicago Fire and Real Salt Lake in the US, is the first to admit they held out little hope after being drawn in a group with Tunisia, 2010 Nations Cup finalists Malawi and Togo, who were at the 2006 World Cup.

Because it is a five-team group, qualifying started while the World Cup in neighbouring South Africa was still in full swing, and the shock 1-0 win in Tunis went virtually unnoticed when, under normal circumstances, it would have generated headlines across the continent.

"When we set off on the first trip to Tunisia, I had no hope," says Selolwane. But the victory saw a sudden spark of self-belief and Botswana began to build momentum by beating Chad, drawing in Malawi and winning at home to Togo.

"By the third game I started to believe we would qualify," adds the 33-year-old midfielder. They then beat Tunisia in the return fixture at home in November, pushing the Zebras to within three points of qualification, which came at the end of March in Chad, where Selolwane set up the winning goal for 25-year-old striker Jerome Ramatlhakwane.

"It has been 13 years for me and [goalkeeper Modiri] Marumo in the national team and finally we get a chance to go to the Nations Cup," says Selolwane. "That is very special." Marumo is among six South Africa-based players in the Botswana squad and Selolwane says the secret of their success is due to the influx of full-time players, explaining: "We have six professionals now but in the past it was just me plus a handful of others who were playing college soccer in the US."

Yet the biggest star of the Zebras' qualifying campaign has not played any club football for the last 18 months.

Ramatlhakwane has scored five times in the six qualifiers but was stuck on the sidelines in South Africa, where he could not get a game at Cape Town club Santos and was then sidelined for months in a transfer dispute with Vasco da Gama.

"I am not actually match fit," says the striker. "I have some way to go before I get back to my best, but that will only come with playing games. The technical team of the national side have supported me and given me programmes to work on. That motivates me to do well because most national coaches, don't select you if you're not playing for your club.

"But Stanley Tshosane is not like that. He believes in me."

Tshosane is in his second spell as coach and has added a strong sense of self-belief to the groundwork put in place by his predecessors, the Englishman Colwyn Rowe and Veselin Jelusic from Serbia.

> "When we set off for our first game in Tunisia, I had no hope"
> **Dipsy Selolwane**

"I think people sometimes look at our country and say 'nothing good can come from there' without really looking at the players," says Ramatlhakwane. "Yet anybody who really knows football would have looked at our squad this time round and maybe seen that we had the ability to make the step up.

"There is so much belief in the squad and we believe we can win every game, home and away. Maybe before, when we travelled, we would be happy with a point and play for that, but not now. Now we only think about winning." WS

Team talk...coach Stanley Tshosane gets his message across during Botswana's 1-0 victory over group favourites Tunisia in Gaborone in November 2010

LOU ECONOMOPOULOS in Athens

No stopping the runaway train

Olympiakos seal the title with three games remaining

Chorus line...Olympiakos celebrate clinching the title

The Super League season has been plagued by serious allegations of match fixing, criticism of officials, and ongoing violence on and off the pitch. Nothing, however, could stop Olympiakos from celebrating their 38th title by the middle of March.

This season's competition may have been condemned by Panathinaikos' Portuguese coach Jesualdo Ferreira as "fake," but Olympiakos were the real deal as they sealed the championship three matches before the end of the campaign with a 6-0 thrashing of rivals AEK.

Two of Olympiakos' goals were scored by Rafik Djebbour, who had joined them from AEK just two months earlier.

"I am very proud that we won today and are deserving champions," said Djebbour. "I left my feelings about my former team in the locker room and I promised the president [Vangelis Marinakis] I would do my best."

Olympiakos' 24-year-old Belgian striker Kevin Mirallas is the league's second-top scorer, behind Djibril Cisse, after grabbing his 13th goal of the season against AEK. Swedish defender Olof Mellberg, Spanish midfielder David Fuster and German defender Jose Holebas were also on target. The result equalled AEK's worst-ever league defeat, which came 30 years ago against the same opponents at the old Karaiskakis Stadium in a game marred by the death of 21 supporters who, in a rush to leave the stadium, were crushed by the crowd.

"No one can deny we are the best team," said Olympiakos' Spanish coach Ernesto Valverde, who joined last summer and brought with him both discipline and attacking football. "The players have earned every success."

Valverde revived players reaching the end of their career, such as Dennis Rommedahl, and ignored big names in favour of those fit and eager to play.

> "I left my feelings about my former team in the locker room"
> **Olympiakos' Rafik Djebbour**

A major credit, too, should go to owner Marinakis, who took over from Sokratis Kokkalis before the start of the season and looks set to build on his predecessor's dynasty. He funded player arrivals and supported Valverde throughout the season in his selections. With the season winding down, Marinakis will now turn his attention to signing players who can help his club do well in the Champions League.

Olympiakos were by far the most consistent team in the league, losing only four times and with a 100 per cent home record. "The excellent atmosphere in the squad was a key to our success," said vice-president Yiannis Moralis, who added that to have top players sitting on the bench and not grumble was not easy, but this was handled well by Valverde "who brought out the best in them on the pitch".

For Olympiakos and their supporters, all the complaints about a league beset by problems fell on deaf ears.

The celebrations for a 13th title in the last 15 years had began in February when they beat another rival, Panathinaikos, 2-1 after a controversial late goal.

Olympiakos fans rushed onto the pitch after the final whistle to celebrate. During the ensuing chaos, they harassed Panathinaikos players as they tried to make a quick escape. One of the victims was Pana's French star Cisse, who claimed he was assaulted by Marinakis.

"I had expected the president of the Super League and Olympiakos, Mr Marinakis, to issue an apology, if belatedly, for his behaviour toward my team-mates and me after the match at their ground," said Cisse in a statement from a lawsuit issued against Marinakis – who, in retaliation, sued Cisse for slander and libel. "The behaviour of Mr Marinakis offends sport."

Pana issued a similar statement, complaining that Marinakis was unfit to head the Super League.

Marinakis was also reportedly involved in an investigation conducted by the Athens prosecutor's office into allegations of corruption and attempted match-fixing in the Super League this term. In fact, the government has requested that the Greek football federation intervene and assume authority from the Super League.

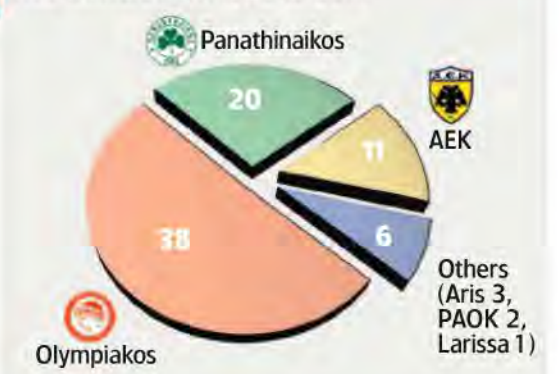
Alexis Kouyias, a prominent Athens lawyer and president of third-division club Panachaiki, has handed the authorities taped conversations which he claims provide evidence of attempts to bribe a Greek referee and others.

One match in question was last August's Europa League match between Maccabi Tel Aviv and Olympiakos, although Marinakis has denied allegations that he tried to influence the referee.

The federation has also been asked to consider using foreign referees for certain domestic matches after dozens of complaints this season. WS

GREEK NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Title winners from 1928 to 2011



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NICK BIDWELL
in Munich

Coaching carousel goes into overdrive

Bundesliga boardrooms get twitchy with cull of managers

With five clubs having changed their coach in the five weeks leading up to the international break in March – and a further two announcing that they would do likewise at the end of the current campaign – it would appear that the Bundesliga's increasingly edgy boardroom suits need little in the way of encouragement to play their brutal part in what appears to many to be collective madness.

In keeping with their long, inglorious tradition for behind-the-scenes power plays and ruthless bloodletting, Schalke's jettisoning of coach, general manager and board member Felix Magath – a decision which was made shortly after he had seen his team qualify for the quarter-final stage of the Champions League – produced more sound, fury and controversy than all the other springtime notices to quit combined.

Clearly aware that he had to choose his words carefully, Schalke president Clemens Tonnies – who, appropriately, is the owner of a butchery firm – gave cryptic hints in a press conference that Magath had been axed for a breach of club rules - widely assumed to be his failure to consult with the board when spending more than £250,000 on a player - and said legal action was pending. Magath, as hard-nosed as ever, responded with a letter of resignation, an innocent-on-all-counts plea and threatened an unfair dismissal case.

Two days later, however, the judicial dogs were called off, Schalke stressing that their former coach had not acted with impropriety and Magath shelving his demand for a £10million settlement – what he would have earned over the remaining two years of his contract. The *Suddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper claimed Schalke agreed to transfer £1.75m into Magath's bank account, the club labelling it a performance-related bonus rather than a compensation package.

In essence this was not a sacking prompted by wrongdoing in the transfer market. Yes, Magath had recruited a raft of new signings, many of them scouted on a wing and a prayer, but Schalke's mud-slinging has to be seen for what it is: a heavily-indebted club (some £220m in the red) hoping to whip up a smokescreen and avoid a full pay-off.

Magath undeniably achieved a lot in his 20 months in charge of the Royal Blues: taking the runners-up spot in last term's Bundesliga and grabbing considerable cup success in this, as they are through to the German Cup Final as well as the last eight in Europe.

Ultimately, though, he was undone by mediocre results in this season's Bundesliga and his toxic relations with many of his squad.

Although no one can cast doubt on his record - back-to-back doubles with Bayern Munich in 2005 and 2006, and Wolfsburg's fairy-tale championship in 2009 - Magath is nothing less than a dinosaur when it comes to man-management. If, like him, you are obsessed with discipline and the world's most punishing physical conditioning regime, you at least have to show some

Goodbye...Magath's lack of man-management ultimately proved his downfall at Schalke

> "Inhuman dealings are not our way. I told Magath he had to get people onside"
> **Schalke president Clemens Tonnies**

BUNDESLIGA COACHING MOVES 2010-11

DATE	CLUB	OUT	IN
Oct	Stuttgart	Christian Gross	Jens Keller
Oct	Koln	Zvonimir Soldo	Frank Schaefer
Dec	Stuttgart	Jens Keller	Bruno Labbadia
Jan	Hoffenheim	Ralf Rangnick	Marco Pezzaiuoli
Feb	Wolfsburg	Steve McClaren	Pierre Littbarski*
Feb	Borussia MG	Michael Frontzeck	Lucien Favre
Mar	Hamburg	Armin Veh	Michael Oenning
Mar	Schalke	Felix Magath	Ralf Rangnick
Mar	Wolfsburg	Pierre Littbarski*	Felix Magath
Mar	E Frankfurt	Michael Skibbe	Christoph Daum
Jul	Freiburg	Robin Dutt	Marcus Sorg
Jul	Bayer Leverksuen	Jupp Heynckes	Robin Dutt
Jul	Bayern Munich	Louis Van Gaal	Jupp Heynckes

* caretaker appointment

warmth and emotion occasionally. Yet all he had to offer was aloofness and a lack of communication. Frustrated and annoyed, players representatives twice went to Tonnies with complaints about the coach's dictatorial methods and, as the levels of dressing-room dissent rose, the board came under pressure to act.

"Some players asked that I talk with the coach about his conduct towards them," said Tonnies. "Schalke is known for its togetherness and friendly spirit. Inhuman dealings are not our way. I told Magath he had to get people onside."

Centre-back Benedikt Howedes added: "We tried to improve our relationship with the coach, but it didn't work out."

Too set in his ways to abandon the rod of iron, too inflexible to compromise, Magath simply went on as before and, in doing so, speeded his demise.

Both parties had good reason to make peace and move on. Schalke had to complete the negotiations to bring in former Hoffenheim coach Ralf Rangnick – back for a second spell in Gelsenkirchen – while in an almost surreal development, Magath agreed to a return to Wolfsburg, the club on which he unceremoniously turned his back immediately after their stunning 2009 triumph.

There is an old saying about never going back and Magath may live to regret it. Today's dishevelled and relegation-threatened Wolfsburg have little in common with his all-conquering side and it will require every trick in Magath the Fireman's book to put this blaze out.

Typically, his first public comment on returning to the VW-backed club related to the side's fitness, or rather lack of it, as he commented: "Physically we're not up to scratch. They are in bad condition."

Meanwhile, the decision of the Bayern high command to call time on the reign of the ever-irascible Louis Van Gaal at the end of this season was as unsurprising as Schalke's parting with Magath. Last season's domestic double winners and Champions League runners-up have rarely played with the same confidence and effectiveness this term and, with Dortmund running away with the Bundesliga and the Bavarians in serious danger of not even claiming Germany's third Champions League qualifying spot, the impulse for change proved irresistible.

Van Gaal's fate was sealed by what club president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge described as "eight catastrophic days" in which a 3-1 home league defeat at the hands of Dortmund was followed by a 1-0 loss against Schalke in the semi-finals of the German Cup and a shock 3-1 reverse at the Bundesliga's surprise packet Hannover. Van Gaal only has himself to blame as, while it's been patently clear for some time that Bayern are short of top calibre defenders, the former Ajax and Barcelona boss has stubbornly refused to seek reinforcements. With his back four either overrun or downright shoddy, he ended up paying the price.

A coach's well-being depends on getting the big decisions right. Unfortunately for Van Gaal he has not, with his judgment rightly called into question on a number of matters – not least the 13 different defensive line-ups he has employed, his decision to allow influential captain and midfield enforcer Mark Van Bommel to join Milan in January and the ill-advised promotion of young Thomas Kraft to first-choice goalkeeper.

Bayern certainly have taken a risk by announcing Van Gaal's delayed departure. Lame-duck solutions do not tend to work in football and those who believe they should have gone for a clean break will have felt vindicated after Bayern were dumped out of the Champions League by Internazionale. One-nil winners in the first leg in Italy, Bayern should have been home and hosed, only to go out on away goals after a 3-2 defeat on their own patch.

For Bayern's sake, let's hope the penny has dropped. Right-back Philipp Lahm apart, their defensive unit is a shambles and recreating a solid rearguard has to be the priority of priorities.

Van Gaal's successor is set to be Leverkusen's Jupp Heynckes, who will have his third spell in the Bayern hot-seat. To fill the void, the Leverkusener have appointed Freiburg's Robin Dutt (see *Six of the Best*, page 79). WS

Euro sandwich...Bayern's Franck Ribery (left) and Thomas Muller block out Inter's Lucio in the Champions League

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HOWARD JOHNSON
in Paris

Red card for refs

Protest threat forces Ligue 1 to use officials from the third division

The threat of industrial action by the country's top referees resulted in the 26th round of matches in Ligue 1 being looked after by officials from the third tier of French football.

On March 4, just 24 hours before the league programme kicked off, the French Football Federation (FFF) received a letter from the Union Of Elite Football Referees highlighting a number of its members' grievances, including "a total lack of consideration for referees" and "a lack of desire for constructive dialogue". The letter finished by stating that the elite refs had decided they would delay the start of that weekend's top matches by 15 minutes to express their dissatisfaction with the way they were being treated.

This decision didn't go down at all well with the federation, nor with Frederic Thiriez, president of the Professional Football League, who said: "Referees are employed by the federation, but we pay €11million a year for their services and I can't accept this kind of behaviour – and nor can our clients the broadcasters."

FFF president Fernand Duchaussoy was in similarly combative mood and issued a statement saying his organisation had opted to search for alternative referees "who will respect the federation's rules". After a brief and unsuccessful attempt to solicit Italian referees, the federation was forced to draft in French refs from the third division to officiate that weekend's Ligue 1 matches.

Duchaussoy denounced the actions of the referees' union, throwing some new light on the argument by revealing that the letter he'd received had indeed talked about a general lack of respect towards officials, but it had also highlighted the referees' dissatisfaction regarding the federation's new sponsorship deal with Nike, which obliges them to wear the company's kit while officiating. The referees wanted a bigger financial share of the deal and had said they would wear their old Adidas strips with the company logo covered by the word "respect".

"The federation regrets the fact that the referees' union has used the argument about respect to force a financial issue. That's not exactly respectful," countered Duchaussoy.

Interestingly enough, top French officials have seen their salaries rise threefold over the last 10 years, putting them on a par with their English and German counterparts. They now have an average annual salary of more than £62,000, plus an award of £10,750 for each year of service that they can take as a lump sum when they retire.

And so the weekend programme took place with third division officials in charge – and passed off without any major incidents. Ligue 1 coaches, aware of the pressure the inexperienced referees were under, were on their best behaviour and were quick to praise the officials on duty. Even notorious naysayers such as Montpellier boss Rene Girard, whose side lost 1-0 at home to Rennes, had kind words for 29-year-old Thomas Leonard after the game. "He did really well," said Girard. "Particularly because it was a tough, physical game.

> "They're going to have to accept criticism just like managers and players"
> **Rennes coach Frederic Antonetti**

When asked about his own thoughts on the whole refereeing saga during the post-match press conference, Rennes boss Frederic Antonetti posed the pertinent question as to whether referees are now considered an intrinsic part of the game, just as coaches and players are? When the assembled journalists replied in the affirmative, Antonetti was quick to retort: "Well then, they're going to have to accept criticism, just like managers and players, aren't they?"

Meetings have been held between any number of concerned organisations in order to find some common ground between the warring factions in an attempt to leave this sorry saga behind. However, it remains to be seen whether cordial relations can be re-established between the federation and the referees. With officials tending to come in for criticism whatever they do in football, who on earth would want to be the man in the middle in France right now? WS

Step up... third-tier referee Alexandre Perreau Niel speaks to the captains before the Caen v Saint-Etienne game in Ligue 1

KLAAS-JAN DROPPERT
in The Hague

Den Haag dig deep

Once-troubled club are making waves among the big boys

For years Den Haag were synonymous with hooliganism, financial trouble and an underperforming team. The last thing that supporters would connect the club from The Hague to were successful results and beautiful football.

But this season everything has turned 180 degrees, with Den Haag playing the best football in the country and setting their sights firmly on qualification for Europe next term. With six games to go they were fifth, which would put them into the play-offs for the Europa League and within touching distance of a first continental campaign since 1987.

Four years ago, second-tier strugglers Den Haag were at an all-time low. With problems on and off the pitch, most people agreed that the club had reached its final chapter. But the team made a miraculous return to form, gaining promotion to the Eredivisie via the play-offs in 2008, despite finishing sixth in the Eerste Divisie (second tier).

It wouldn't be the end of their troubles, though. Last year the players turned their backs on coach Raymond Atteveld, the former Everton midfielder, forcing him to leave, and almost every player openly declared a desire to go at the end of the season due to the tense atmosphere.

It took the arrival of businessman Mark Van der Kallen and new coach John Van den Brom to turn things around.

While Van der Kallen resolved the club's financial problems, former Ajax reserve midfielder Van den Brom copied the training style of his former boss Louis Van Gaal and turned Den Haag into an attractive, passing outfit, explaining: "I'm not afraid to go flat out. In the end, attacking football will lead to the best results."

> "I'm not afraid to go flat out. Attack will lead to the best results in the end"
> **Den Haag coach John Van den Brom**

And so far his philosophy has been proved right, with away wins at arch-rivals Ajax and table-toppers PSV, the latter their first in 40 years.

Van den Brom's side is made up of players eager to grab their last chance or looking to make their breakthrough. Goalkeeper Gino Coutinho looked to have a promising future after captaining Holland at the 2001 World Youth Championship, but his career stalled until he joined Den Haag in 2008. Last year he was arrested for having a hemp plantation on his property, but he protested his innocence, saying that the shed was rented by someone else. Despite still not being off the hook, he is having his best season ever.

In front of him, Timothy Derijck is the youngest captain in the Eredivisie at 23. The Belgian was released by Feyenoord two years ago, but has now developed into an aggressive central defender who is attracting interest across Europe.

In midfield Slovenian Aleksandar Radosavljevic, who has had stints in Russia and Greece, balances the team with his ball-winning ability. Next to him is local hero Lex Immers, who is improving with every season, and dynamic 22-year-old Jens Toornstra. When Toornstra was at third-tier amateur club Alphense Boys a few years ago their chairman Kees Jansma – the Dutch FA's press officer and a television producer – recommended him to various clubs, but only Den Haag were prepared to take a gamble on a player who is now being watched closely by national coach Bert Van Marwijk.

Up front, right-winger Wesley Verhoek had always been known for his inconsistency, but this season he has scored the winners at Ajax and PSV and has produced a dozen assists. On the other flank the little-known Frantisek Kubik, signed from Slovakian second division side Trencin, has been one of the season's best newcomers.

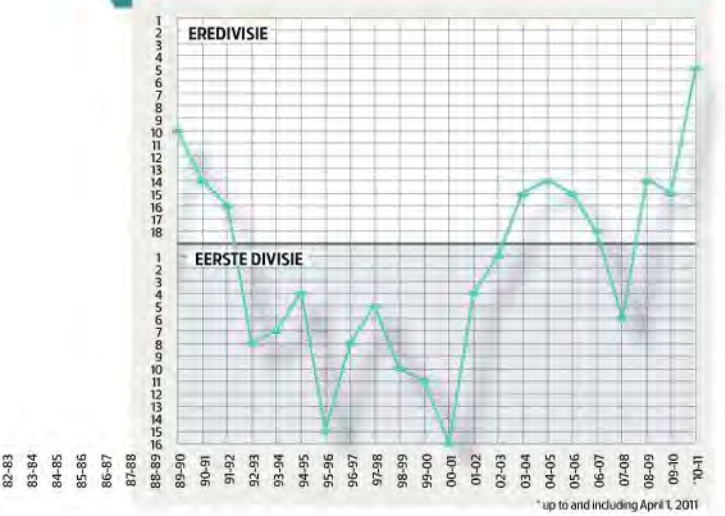
But the story of the campaign has been that of Dmitry Bulykin. After failing to make his mark at Anderlecht and Bayer Leverkusen, partly because of injuries, the 31-year-old striker had a trial at Den Haag but didn't manage to convince Van den Brom of his fitness. The indignant Bulykin took off his shirt to point out all his muscles and forced the coach to have a change of heart, taking him on loan from Anderlecht for the season. The bullish former Russia striker is almost unbeatable in the air as he chases the league's top-scorer title and displays the kind of form that earned him 15 caps and seven goals, including one at Euro 2004, for his country.

Even Van den Brom is asking, "where will it all end?" as the club from Holland's third-largest city attempts to finally become a force in Dutch football.

However, with so many players either on loan or attracting the interest of richer sides, and the club still not totally debt free, it is questionable if Den Haag will be able to repeat this performance next season. So, for now, they should enjoy it while it lasts. WS

Power game...striker Bulykin (left) has proved his worth this season

THE FALL AND RISE OF DEN HAAG



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JAMES MONTAGUE
in East Jerusalem

Out of exile

Palestine's national side played their first competitive international on home soil in March

The collective weight of expectation rested on the lonely shoulders of a man called Zidan. A storm had enveloped the Faisal Al Husseini Stadium in East Jerusalem's Al Ram district, and freezing sheets of hail hammered down on the pitch and into the face of the white-shirted midfielder.

A whole people, if not yet a whole nation, held its breath.

Amjad Zidan stood 12 yards from goal, about to take the crucial penalty that would either continue Palestine's Olympic dream or condemn them to familiar disappointment. Yet few in the feverish, 17,000-strong Palestinian crowd ever thought they would get this close: 1-0 on the night, 1-1 on aggregate after extra time, 5-5 on penalties. Now it was sudden death.

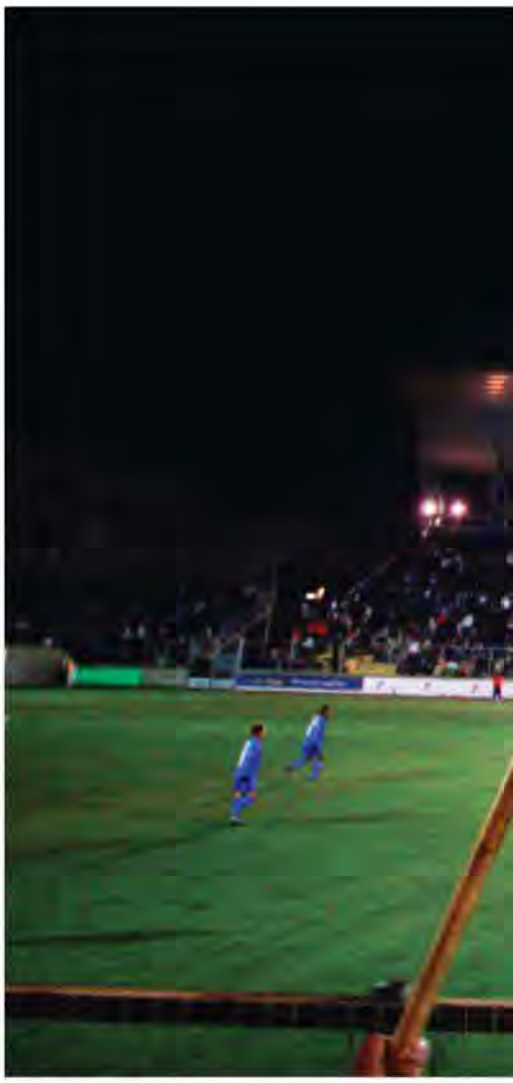
After more than a decade of movement restrictions, arrests, deaths, exile and homelessness, Palestine's national team was playing its very first competitive international at home: a preliminary qualifier for the 2012 Olympic football tournament, against Thailand.

In the grand scale of global football fixtures such a game would be little more than a minor footnote. But this was different. Since joining FIFA in 1998, Palestine – a national team without a nation – have had to play all their home games in exile. They have even seen their players from Gaza and the West Bank regularly refused permission by the Israeli authorities to play in crucial fixtures, and they had not been able to run a national league for 10 years due to the ubiquity of Israeli checkpoints.

Today, Gazan players are rarely allowed to leave the beleaguered enclave. Four were granted permission for the Thailand game, but eight were refused – half of the starting line-up according to Mokhtar Tlili, the Tunisian coach of the Palestine side who was himself denied entry to the West Bank until the night before the match. Even Asian Football Confederation president Mohamed Bin Hammam was held at the Jordanian border.

The recent short history of Palestinian football may have been defined by the troubles but now, for the first time, Palestine enjoyed a true home advantage.

The crowd of young men behind the goal, the players in the centre circle, even the prime minister, Salam Fayyad, watching in the VIP stand, froze as they prepared for the ball to bulge the back of the net. Zidan stood nervously in front of the Thailand goalkeeper, awaiting his cue, the hail seemingly falling harder as the referee blew his whistle...



> "My heart aches tonight. I wanted to show the Palestinian people that this was a victory for sport"
> **Palestine coach Mokhtar Tlili**

Too much to take... defender Barghouthi is in tears after defeat

Thousands crushed inside

A few hours earlier, the bus from Ramallah had hugged the silver, graffiti-scarred separation barrier as it approached the Faisal Al Husseini Stadium. The wall is a mere 100 metres from the pitch, the stadium barely four kilometres from Jerusalem's old city.

Thousands crushed inside the ground three hours before kick-off as the sky hung dark and ominous from the earlier rain; coating the fans, the seats and the stands in thick, lightly-coloured mud. Police in riot gear pedantically removed poles from fans' Palestinian flags, confiscated fizzy drinks and checked for weapons to prove that the Palestinians can organise a match to the newly required standard that is expected for competitive international football.

But the numbers were too great and hundreds surged through the single metal door and into the stands, causing a crush. Fans scrambled up the sheer concrete walls, pulled up by other fans, to escape the dangerous ebb and flow of bodies until the police regained control.

Around the stadium, posters illustrated the importance that the Palestinian authorities place on football: huge posters of Yasser Arafat, the Dome of the Rock, president Mahmoud Abbas, Palestine FA president Jibril Rajoub and FIFA president Sepp Blatter. A hastily erected poster of AFC chief Bin Hammam also hung from a nearby building.

The national anthems passed without incident and the politicians basked in the glow of international media attention. But it took 45 minutes for the stadium to explode into life when Al Hamid Abuu Habib, a player from Gaza, scored for

Show of defiance...a Palestine flag conveys a nation's hopes during the Olympic qualifier against Thailand at the Faisal Al Husseini Stadium

Palestine. The stands erupted in song, chants, tabla drums and whistles. The captain took off his armband, kissed it and pointed towards the prime minister sitting in the crowd.

"The national team is very important. It is an important symbol," said the goalscorer while sheltering from the driving rain at half-time. "The national football team is a symbol of this country. It has that kind of significance, for sure. That [a player from Gaza scored] makes it all the more sweet."

But he urged a word of warning, adding: "We have the second half now. If the score stays as it is, we have an extra half-hour of football."

It proved prophetic. Chances came and went until the final whistle blew at 1-0. The Prime Minister, with his white-and-black keffiyeh wrapped around his neck, paced through the stand, watching every minute of extra time unfold. "I hate penalties," he explained, rocking back on his heals, with his hands in his pockets for protection against the freezing cold early evening. "I won't watch penalties. I'll look this way!"

He pointed to the sky. But he watched; as we all did.

For Zidan – not to mention the crowd and the world's press – there would be no fairy-tale ending. The whistle blew, and Zidan's spot kick was saved.

Half the crowd had gone before Seeket Madputeh sealed Palestine's fate with the winning penalty for the visitors. The players, shattered from bombarding the Thailand goal, missing chance after chance even after the Thais had been reduced to 10 men, left the field with heads bowed.

It was too much for defender Nadim Barghouthi, the "soldier without a weapon", who ran down the tunnel, his face streaming with tears, inconsolable.

Moral victory

Small, rare victories tempered by the reality of failure – of one step forward, two steps back – is a common narrative for the Palestinians. Certainly Tlili didn't find comfort in the moral victory.

"This leaves a bitter taste in the mouth," he said in the tunnel as the press and fans melted away, back to the buses ferrying people to Nablus, Jericho and Jenin. "We played well. But my heart aches tonight.

"I wanted to show the Tunisian people, in the context of the revolution, and the Palestinian people, that this was a victory for sport. It was a political victory, but I wanted it to be a sporting victory as well."

Tlili walked alone down the tunnel, back to the dejected dressing room, his and Palestine's Olympic dream over.

Palestine's first qualifier for the 2014 World Cup finals in Brazil in June will again come with the benefit of home advantage. This battle may have been lost, but the war is still far from over. WS

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PHILIPPE GERMAIN
in Montreal

The Northwest Experiment

New MLS sides are at the heart of league's development strategy

In the spirit of the famous quote from American author Horace Greeley, "Go West, young man", Major League Soccer has invested a chunk of its future in westward expansion as the 16th year of operation welcomed Canada's Vancouver Whitecaps and Portland Timbers from Oregon.

Along with the arrival of Seattle Sounders three years ago, this makes for a serious experiment in regional rivalries in the Pacific Northwest, with MLS commissioner Don Garber admitting: "Our interest is more regional than national. We wanted to connect the dots between clubs."

Sounders have been the league's main attraction since they jumped on board in 2009, drawing an average attendance of over 35,000 – which is more than double the league's figure. Just as impressively, Whitecaps have sold 15,000 season tickets, meaning that with single-game ticket holders and walk-ups they should regularly attract over 20,000, while the "Timbers Army" – Portland fans who are considered the most boisterous in America – should help their 20,000-seat Jeld-Wen Field to complete an intimidating trio of venues.

MLS rules state clubs only have to release 150 tickets to travelling supporters – something that became a point of contention with followers of the three clubs.

"The reality is that more than that will show up to watch their side play in each others' stadium and, for safety and security reasons, it's important to make sure the away supporters are kept together and separate from the home supporters" says Garrett Dittfurth, spokesperson of the Timbers Army.

According to FIFA guidelines, five per cent of a stadium should be reserved for visiting fans, which makes for a thousand tickets in Vancouver and Portland, and double that in Seattle. Eventually the clubs settled on 500 tickets.

Under different ownership groups, these teams previously crossed paths in the NASL between 1975 and 1982, then in the A-League/USL First Division between 2001 and 2008, giving birth to unofficial regional tournament the Cascadia Cup, before being reborn this season in MLS.

"There's no question that these rivalries will create excitement and our hope is to use [the Pacific Northwest] as a test market for future opportunities", says Garber – and the project to add a second club in the New York City area will be an easy sale if it succeeds.

Vancouver Whitecaps are the most successful club in the history of the professional game in Canada, with a NASL Soccer Bowl title in 1979, four straight Canadian League Cup conquests in the 1980s and a pair of USL First Division Cup victories in 2006 and 2008.

Despite a less-furnished trophy case than their Canuck neighbours, Portland's committed owners, stadium and local support also makes them a perfect fit for MLS as the league attempts to build on the tremendous successes of Seattle. And the Canadian game will only benefit from the addition, in 2012, of the Montreal Impact, based in a city with an everlasting rivalry with all things Toronto.

> "There's no question that these rivalries will create excitement"
> **MLS commissioner Don Garber**

Vancouver's victory over Toronto in their opening MLS game this season could not have been more perfect, having humiliated their Eastern Canadian rivals 4-2 before a full house and a record national television audience for a league match on a glorious Saturday afternoon.

With two goals in the opening game, and a 57th-minute red card in his second match of the season, 6ft 4in Whitecaps' French striker Eric Hassli is showing the mix of flair and grit that could easily flare up the rivalry and fuel the Northwest Experiment in the right direction. WS

New era... Vancouver (in white) and Toronto take to the field ahead of their MLS opener in March

SURINAM

STEVE MENARY

Plea for sports passports

The former Dutch colony hopes to change eligibility rules

While Mexico and the United States are usually certainties to take two of the three CONCACAF World Cup finals places, the former Dutch colony of Surinam has never even been in the running for the third spot. However, all that could soon change.

"If we get access to the Surinam players with Dutch passports, we will be there in Brazil [in 2014]," says Surinam's national coach Kenneth Jaliens.

Dutch legends with Surinamese roots – such as triple Champions League winner Clarence Seedorf and Edgar Davids – once lit up the *Oranje*, but Jaliens is referring to a new generation that includes the Feyenoord duo Georginio Wijnaldum and Kelvin Leerdam, PSV's Genero Zeefuik and Heracles winger Darl Douglas.

Seedorf's generation were mostly the children of immigrants from Surinam, which won independence in 1975. Surinam won the first Caribbean Championship in October 1978 but, since independence, players joining a club in the Dutch Eredivisie need a work permit. Once that is secured, turning out for Surinam in internationals is impossible.

As Surinam is not in the European Union, their players are treated as overseas internationals, and at 114th in the FIFA rankings the team is well short of the top-70 ranking needed to make an EU work permit possible.

Now the Surinamese FA (SVB) and the Dutch FA is looking into the possibility of a "sports passport" to enable players of Surinamese descent that don't make the *Oranje* to turn out for Surinam.

Surinam has 341 clubs but these are predominantly junior sides – and include an academy set up by Seedorf which is known as the Brothers. Just 10 teams are in the Hoofdklasse and a dozen in the second tier.

The game is amateur and players must go to Jamaica or Trinidad if they want to play professionally. National keeper Ronny Aloema spent two seasons in Tobago, but he has since returned home to Transvaal, who are traditionally one of the strongest two teams.

A derby between Transvaal and rivals Robinhood could draw crowds of 15,000 for important fixtures, which are usually staged at the Andre Kamperveen Stadion in Paramaribo. Half of the top-flight sides come from the capital but the power base has shifted. Most clubs now have their own grounds and the current league and Cup holders are Inter Moengo Tapoe from the eastern Creole district of Marowijne.

Like the national team, Surinam's club sides once enjoyed wider success.

> The Surinamese FA and the Dutch FA are looking into the possibility of a "sports passport"

Transvaal won the CONCACAF club championship in 1973 and 1981, and with Seedorf's help and a possible new influx of internationals the game there could be in for a fillip.

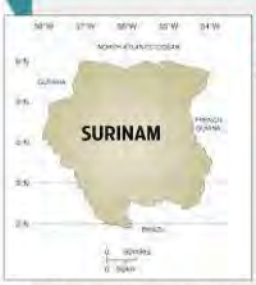
SVB president Louis Giskus believes reaching the World Cup is a realistic aim but says: "A lot of money needs to be invested.

"My ambition is to help develop Surinamese football to a higher level, within the top 50 in the FIFA rankings." WS

Hopeful... Surinam's Emilio Limon (right)

Picture: www.digicelfootball.com

WHERE IN THE WORLD?



The smallest country in South America, Surinam is bordered by French Guiana to the east and Guyana to the west. The southern border is shared with Brazil.

Population	500,000
Size	63,251 sq miles
Capital	Paramaribo
Language	Dutch
Religion	none predominant

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PADDY AGNEW
In Rome

Inter 'miracle' sets up a grand finale

Serie A is bracing itself for a dramatic finish to the title race

There may be reservations about the overall quality of the current Serie A, but there is no denying that this season's contest looks set for one of the most keenly contested finales of the Internazionale-dominated, post-*Calciopoli* era. With eight games to go, Milan, Inter, Napoli and Udinese could all still lift the title, with six points separating the top four.

Leonardo appears to have worked a mid-season miracle at Inter. Not only has the Brazilian coach got the side back into a winning state of mind, he has managed to close the gap on leaders Milan from 13 points when he took over from Rafa Benitez to just two ahead of April's derby.

Having been able to change his Milanese spots with remarkable alacrity and seemingly unimpeded by his 13-year attachment to the "other" side, Leonardo has always been an intelligent guy. Clearly his approach to the experienced Inter dressing room of high-level performers such as Samuel Eto'o, Diego Milito, Wesley Sneijder, Thiago Motta and Julio Cesar has been more softly, softly guru than barking sergeant major. Realistically, though, many of the important pieces have fallen into place for him.

For a start, the Inter fightback was clearly helped by the "in hand" games, prompted by their victorious participation in the pre-Christmas Club World Cup. Secondly, Inter seem to have recovered from a horrendous injury run under Benitez which ruled out Julio Cesar, Maicon, Lucio, Cristian Chivu, Sneijder and Dejan Stankovic, with only Walter Samuel and Milito still sidelined.

Thirdly, Leonardo's side have clearly been strengthened by the January purchases of defenders Andrea Ranocchia from Genoa and Japanese star Yuto Nagatoma form Cesena, along with Sampdoria striker Giampaolo Pazzini.

With the wind now very much in his sails, Leonardo may have reason to reflect that March was especially kind to him.

Take the 29th game of the season, away to Brescia on a Friday night, for example. One up after 18 minutes, thanks to the irrepressible Eto'o, the European champions failed to make the most of their dominance and allowed Brescia back into the game with an 84th-minute equaliser from Andrea Caracciolo.

All of a sudden, as happens in these cases, the home team were galvanised and Inter found themselves hanging on for dear life. When Brescia were awarded a 90th-minute penalty it only reflected the way in which the initiative had switched. However, Julio Cesar saved Caracciolo's spot-kick to keep Inter both mathematically and spiritually in the title race.

> Leonardo has the side in a winning state of mind...and the important pieces have fallen into place for him

This was, however, clearly a golden opportunity for Milan to put some breathing space between themselves and Inter when they lined up against Bari at the San Siro two days later. But they too could only claim a 1-1 draw with an unimpressive performance in a game in which they may well have been denied a valid winning goal from Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

The following weekend things got even better for Inter as Milan lost 1-0 at Palermo while they limped to a 1-0 home win against Lecce and the gap was down to two points. In between times, Inter had given themselves a huge morale boost with an against-the-odds away win over Bayern Munich – even overcoming the handicap of a dreadful first-half blunder by Julio Cesar that put Bayern right back into the match – to reach the last eight of the Champions League on away goals.

Behind the Milan cousins are Napoli, who managed to recover from a painful 3-0 defeat by Milan in the San Siro in February to register important wins over Parma and Cagliari that kept their hat firmly in the ring, just a point behind Inter and three behind Milan. On top of that, fourth-placed Udinese have played arguably the best football of 2011 in Serie A.

While it is hard to believe that Udinese could actually win the title, what is sure is that they could have a major say in the shakedown given that on the last day of the season they are at home to Milan.

Although Roma's interest in the title ended a long time ago they remain hopeful of ending the season on a high, confident that the proposed buyout by the US consortium headed by Thomas DiBenedetto will go ahead and then be celebrated by the announcement of an intended big-name purchase, such as Juventus and Italy goalkeeper Gigi Buffon.

It would, however, be interesting to know what the prospective buyers made of the Rome derby in March.

On a foul, windy, wet day, there was a lot of thespian bravura on view, along with some gladiatorial antics, but very little football. As so often in the past, the hero/villain of the piece was Francesco Totti, who not only scored both Roma's late goals in their 2-0 defeat of Lazio but also gave an Oscar-winning, corner-flag performance which produced exactly the intended effect – the dismissal of Romanian defender Stefan Radu. Lazio's cup of woe filled to overflow when referee Paolo Tagliavento awarded Roma a late penalty and sent off another Lazio player, captain Cristian Ledesma.

At 34, "old man" Totti still has a big part to play. His two goals in the 2-2 draw at Fiorentina a week later made him only the sixth player to reach the 200-goal mark in Serie A, and his visceral direct line to Roma's supporters would suggest that the new owners might do well to find a future, off-the-field role for him.

The same applies to Juventus' Alessandro Del Piero, who, at 36, proved he is still capable of scoring a peach of a late winning goal in March's 2-1 home win over Brescia. Despite speculation about a future, behind-the-desk role, Del Piero is not ready to hang up his boots, telling Juve fans he hopes to be in the first team to play in the club's new – as yet unnamed – stadium on the site of the old Delle Alpi. That first game is expected to come at the beginning of next season.

Having suffered a miserable run from February to March – which featured three consecutive defeats by Lecce, Bologna and Milan, and a draw to Cesena – Juventus have dropped to seventh.

Their desperate need to rediscover their best form and qualify for Europe next term is just one more reason why the seasonal finale is sure to be anything other than dull and predictable. WS

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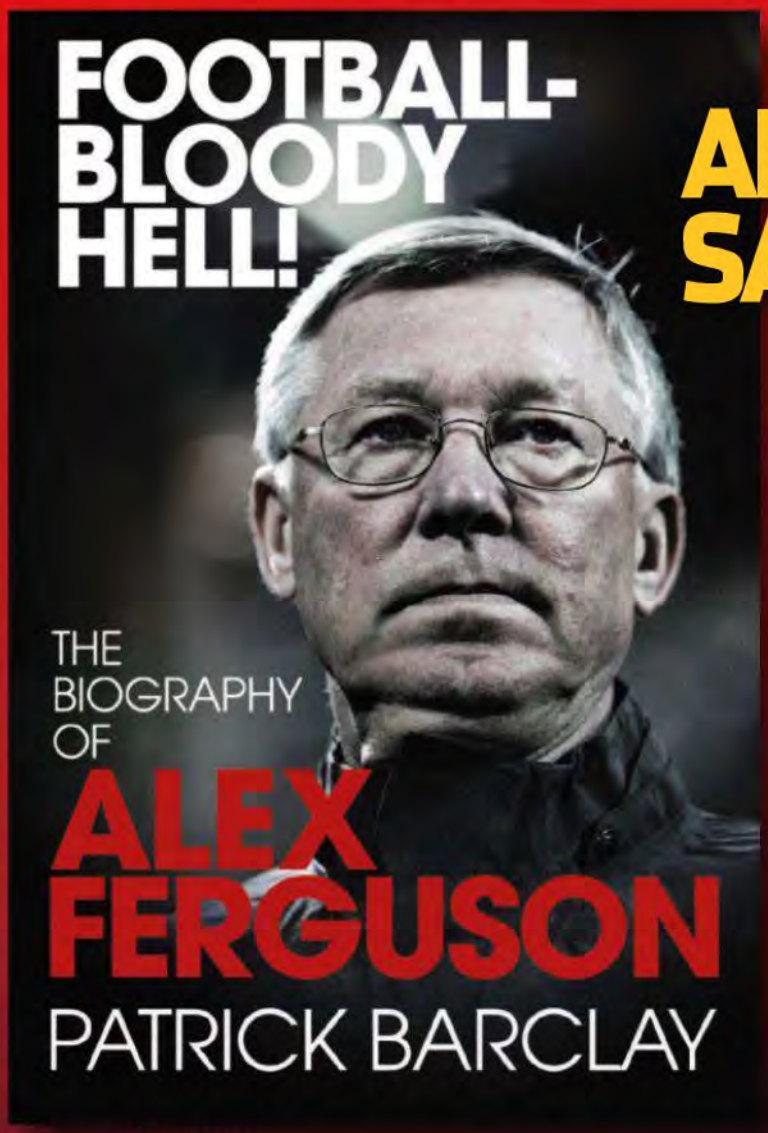

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PLAYER Biography

Wesley Sneijder

They called him arrogant, confrontational, disruptive...but Internazionale's Dutch playmaker has never been one to back down **Profile by Nick Bidwell**

"Give me a child until he is seven and I will give you the man." According to the centuries-old Jesuit maxim, the early stages of life define the adult – and the saying certainly rings true for Internazionale and Holland midfield luminary Wesley Sneijder, whose extraordinary technical gifts and determination to claw his way to the top of his chosen field shone out when still at infant school.

Spotted by Ajax at the age of seven and promptly inducted into the Amsterdammers' famous academy, the kid from Utrecht was a stand-alone prospect even then, prodigious in his ball skills and understanding of the game, and bristling with single-mindedness.

"I saw him arrive at Ajax as a little boy and never doubted that he would make a name for himself," says David Endt, club historian turned team logistics manager. "It was plain he was a phenomenon.

"There were some who thought he was too small and frail to make it, but those sort of comments only seemed to motivate him more. He was never going to be discouraged. From the word go he was hugely ambitious and had so much belief in his ability.

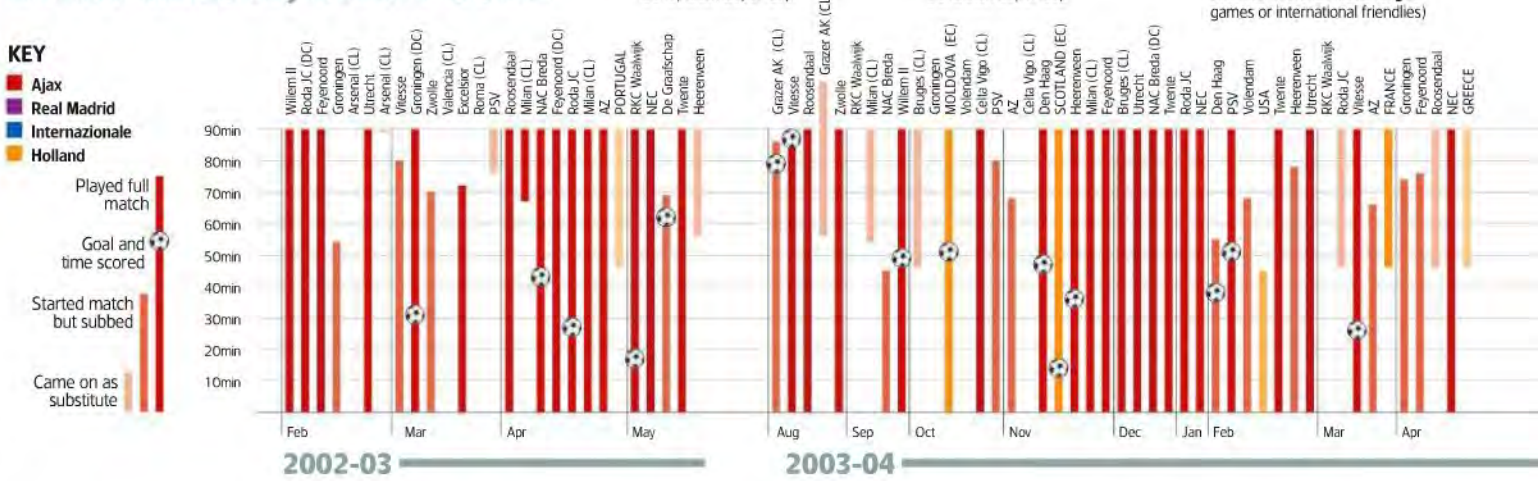
"He was always ready to disprove his critics. He had an anger in him and channelled it to great effect."

Talent, however, only takes the would-be star so far. A limitless supply of grit and drive are also required, and Sneijder had an abundance of both.

When an English teacher once advised

TIMELINE: EVERY MATCH, EVERY MINUTE, EVERY GOAL

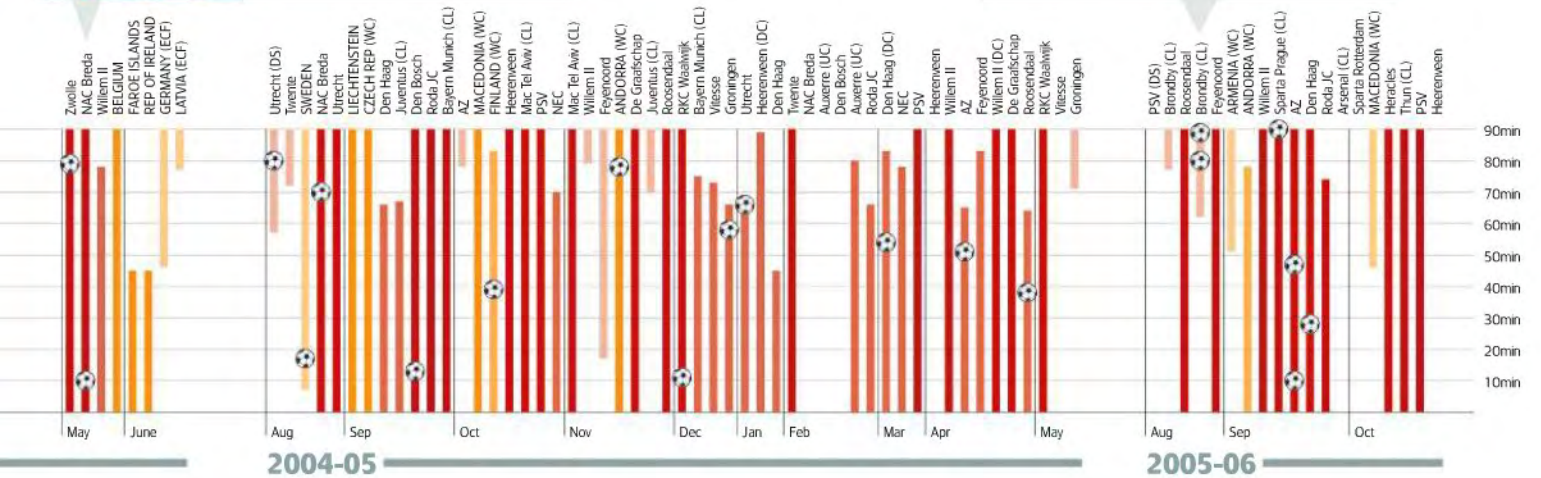
US: UEFA Super Cup
CL: Champions League
UC: UEFA Cup/Europa League
SC: Spanish Cup
SS: Spanish Super Cup
CWC: Club World Cup
IC: Italian Cup
IS: Italian Super Cup
DC: Dutch Cup
DS: Dutch Super Cup
EC: Euro qualifier
ECF: Euro finals
WC: World Cup qualifier
WCF: World Cup finals
(all other matches either league games or international friendlies)



Life's a battle...Sneijder felt he had a point to prove after being cast aside by Real Madrid and joining Inter

May 9, 2004 – scores in the 2-0 defeat of NAC Breda that secured the Eredivisie title for Ajax.

Aug 24, 2005 – scores the first brace of his career as two late strikes against Brondby take Ajax into the Champions League group stage.



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FACT FILE

Wesley Benjamin Sneijder

Nationality
Dutch

Age
26 (09.06.84)

Place of birth
Utrecht, Holland

Height
1.70m (5ft 7in)

Position
Midfielder

Teams
Ajax 2002-2007, Real Madrid 2007-2009, Internazionale 2009-present

Honours
Ajax
Dutch league 2004; Dutch Cup 2006, 2007; Dutch Super Cup 2006.
Real Madrid
Spanish league 2008.
Internazionale
Club World Cup 2010; Champions League 2010; Italian league 2010; Italian Cup 2010; Italian Super Cup 2010.

him to be more realistic in his post-school aims, that a career as a professional footballer was a pipe dream, he replied that if just one Ajax youngster was to make the full-time grade, it would be him. And for all his natural cockiness and propensity for sharing his opinions, he proved himself remarkably disciplined as he rose through the ranks.

He was so thrilled to be part of the Ajax set-up that after his first day at the academy he paraded around his home in full strip and boots. The young Sneijder had no other goal in life other than to become a professional, and he was ready and willing to jump through every hoop his coaches placed before him: those specific to match days, the weekly technical examinations he was subjected to - including his favourite exercise of juggling the ball before flicking it into a basket - the written reports he had to make on first-teamers, the deployment in all positions, and the physical movement sessions from which he believes he still benefits - "It's as I'm dancing," he says.

Tunnel vision

An integral part of the Ajax education process is their continual testing of the spirit and commitment of their apprentices, and, in terms of mentality, young Wes was never going to break. His grandad Benny - who once played alongside Holland midfield great Wim Van Hanegem - and his father Barry had both been high-grade footballers for Utrecht club DOS, and with older brother Jeffrey featuring in the Ajax youth scheme until injury wrecked his hopes, the game was all the young Sneijder knew, and such was his tunnel vision, nothing would stop him.

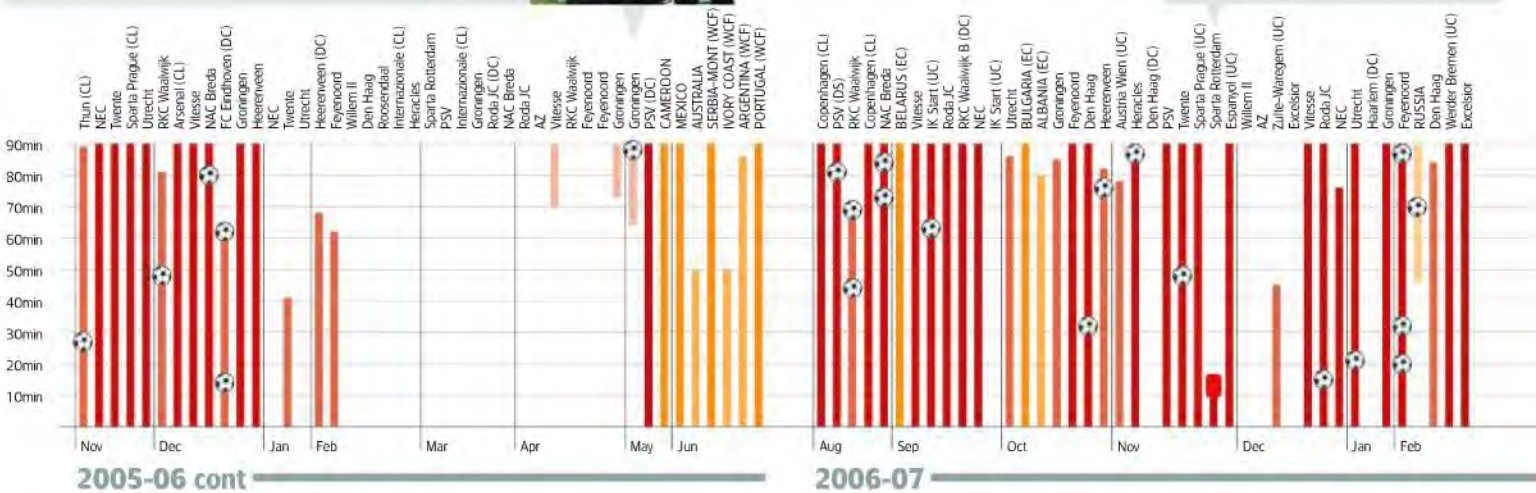
"Wes didn't have any real flaws," says former Holland defender Danny Blind, who coached the boy wonder at Young Ajax. "He had virtually all the qualities you look for in a youngster. He had all the basic skills, he saw the game, had great technique and, most important of all, hated losing.

"We did have some corrections to make. We spent a lot of time working on the weaker of his two feet, the left. I remember coach Jan Olde Riekerink stopping the play if he tried to pass or shoot with his right. Another problem he used to have early on was a tendency to lose focus for a short period on losing the ball or missing the target with a shot. We had to impress upon him that he didn't have the luxury of falling asleep and to make him understand we played him once as a holding midfielder. It made him realise he couldn't wring his hands and switch off when something didn't go to plan."

After Sneijder was voted the best youth team player in the country in 2002 and appeared for Ajax reserves in the semi-final of the 2001-02 Dutch Cup - ironically against Utrecht - it was only a matter of time before he stepped up. Midway through the 2002-03 season the astonishingly confident 18-year-old made his Eredivisie debut, catching the eye with his vivid imagination, give-me-the-ball

May 3, 2006 - after an injury-plagued second half of the season, he scores a late goal in an Eredivisie play-off defeat to Groningen that sees Ajax qualify for 2006-07 Champions League.

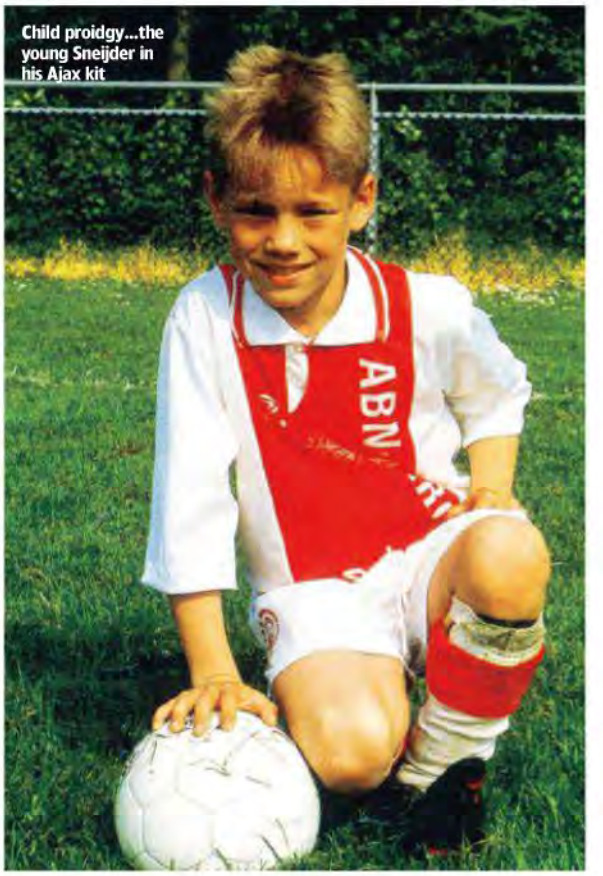
Nov 26, 2006 - sent off for the first time in his career, in the 13th minute of a league game against Sparta Rotterdam.



2005-06 cont

2006-07

Troubled teen...Sneijder (left) is held back by Ajax team-mate Olaf Lindenbergh during his spat with referee Bossen


Child proidgy...the young Sneijder in his Ajax kit

Family fortunes... with father Barry (left) and older brother Jeffrey (centre)

Perfect match...marrying actress and model Yolanthe Cabau in Tuscany in 2010

sparkiness and set-piece mastery.

Funnily enough, Sneijder's volatility and hubris would cause him more trouble once he had broken into the Ajax senior side. A condescending attitude to opponents and team-mates did him no favours, while perceived injustices led to a series of emotional overloads, notably flipping coach Ronald Koeman the bird after coming off the bench to score against Utrecht in the Dutch Super Cup in 2004 and receiving a four-match ban for calling referee Ruud Bossen "a blind, flea-ridden dog" in a fixture with Sparta Rotterdam.

> "He had virtually all the qualities you look for in a youngster"
> **Young Ajax coach and ex-international Danny Blind**

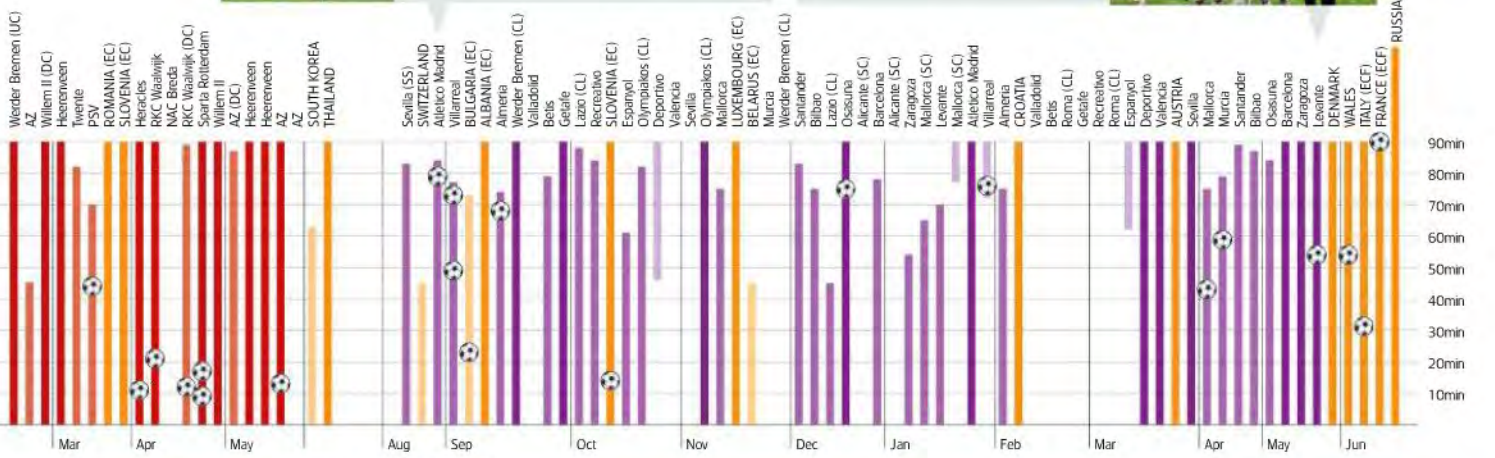
"He used to be a victim of his will-to-win," explains his father. "Often he was so deep in the game that he would lose himself. He hadn't so much patience and wanted too much, too quickly. Since those days he has learned how to control himself better, to take that anger and express it in his feet, not his mouth."

Rather than feeling uncomfortable with young players with strong characters and egos to match, Ajax - with whom he won the Dutch championship in 2004 and two domestic cups in 2006 and 2007 - truly treasure them. Sneijder may have had triple rations of arrogance, but he could play like a dream and, to counter any excesses, more and more responsibility was heaped on him.

"We had several players who could have taken on the role of midfield boss, the playmaker, but it seemed logical to

Aug 25, 2007 – scores his first goal for Real in the 2-1 derby win at home to Atletico.

May 18, 2008 – his goal against Levante helps secure Madrid's second successive La Liga title.



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Feuding stars... Van Persie (left) and Sneijder's bust-up, a legacy of Euro 2008, has long been a matter of public record

me to give the job to Wesley," says former Ajax coach Henk Ten Cate. "I told him he had to lead and direct. He had to decide when we attacked, when we pressed and who would take the set-pieces. I knew he would thrive as the heart of the team. He craved it and was the perfect fit."

Unfortunately for Sneijder, not everyone sees him in such glowing terms. For many observers of the Dutch game, he is the street urchin who gets a kick out of causing trouble and is nothing less than a disruptive influence in the national team camp. His feud with Robin Van Persie, a legacy of a training ground bust-up at Euro 2008 and arguments over who should take free-kicks, has long been a matter of public record and in late 2009 he suffered more bad press when Hugo Borst, a controversial columnist and television personality, claimed he had inside information of Wesley mocking a national team colleague.

"Hey Piet," Sneijder is reported to have asked *Oranje* reserve goalkeeper Piet Velthuizen over breakfast. "How much do you earn?"

"400,000 euros," the Vitesse Arnhem player replied, unaware that he was about to be hit with the punchline: "Don't you think it's funny that I make 20 times that?"

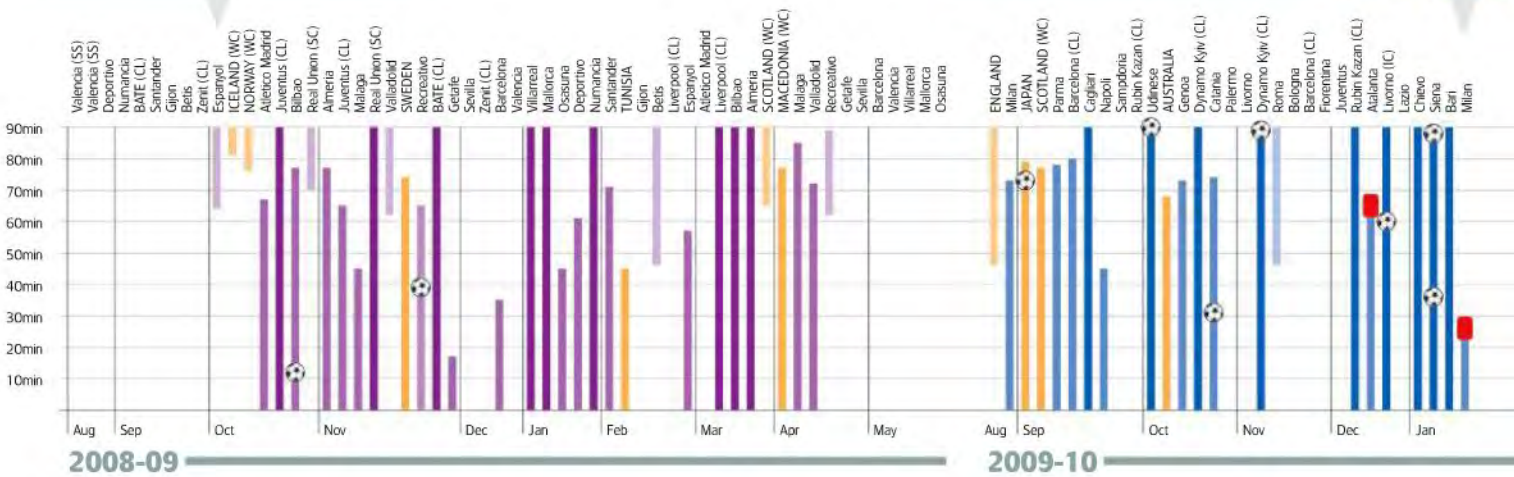
Sneering superstar

While Sneijder would later attempt to pass it off as football banter, others were not so sure, adamant that the story of the sneering superstar had more than an air of authenticity to it.

During the TV programme *Studio Voetbal*, Borst suggested that many of the national squad did not care for Sneijder's attitude, that he was a "potential time

Oct 5, 2008 – after suffering a pre-season injury at Arsenal, he plays his first match of the season in a 2-2 draw with Espanyol.

Jan 24, 2010 – receives his second red card in six weeks at Inter as he is sent off in the 26th minute of the Milan derby.



Determination...Sneijder keeps Roma's Simone Perrotta at bay

handed a round of applause at e

bomb" and that national coach Bert Van Marwijk, who was also present on the set, doubted the player's commitment – an accusation Van Marwijk immediately denied, prompting the irascible Borst to call him a liar.

Not that Sneijder only ever reads for the part of the cocksure rebel. In his full international career, he has had to be more diligent than diva, taking at least five years to fully establish himself in the team. When, as a 19-year-old, he almost single-handedly plotted the 5-0 downfall of Scotland in a Euro 2004 play-off second-leg, scoring the opening goal and making three others, he seemed to have made himself indispensable, but instead went on to flit in and out of the reckoning.

> "I knew he would thrive as the heart of the team...he craved it"
> **Ajax coach Henk Ten Cate**

In the 2004 European Championship he had to play second fiddle to the engine room triumvirate of Phillip Cocu, Edgar Davids and Clarence Seedorf, and at the 2006 World Cup finals he was a square peg in a round hole, employed by coach Marco Van Basten in a deep enforcing role. "I nearly drowned," said Sneijder at the time. "I never discussed the decision with Van Basten. Would you? I was 22 and it was my first World Cup." No sign of insubordination there.

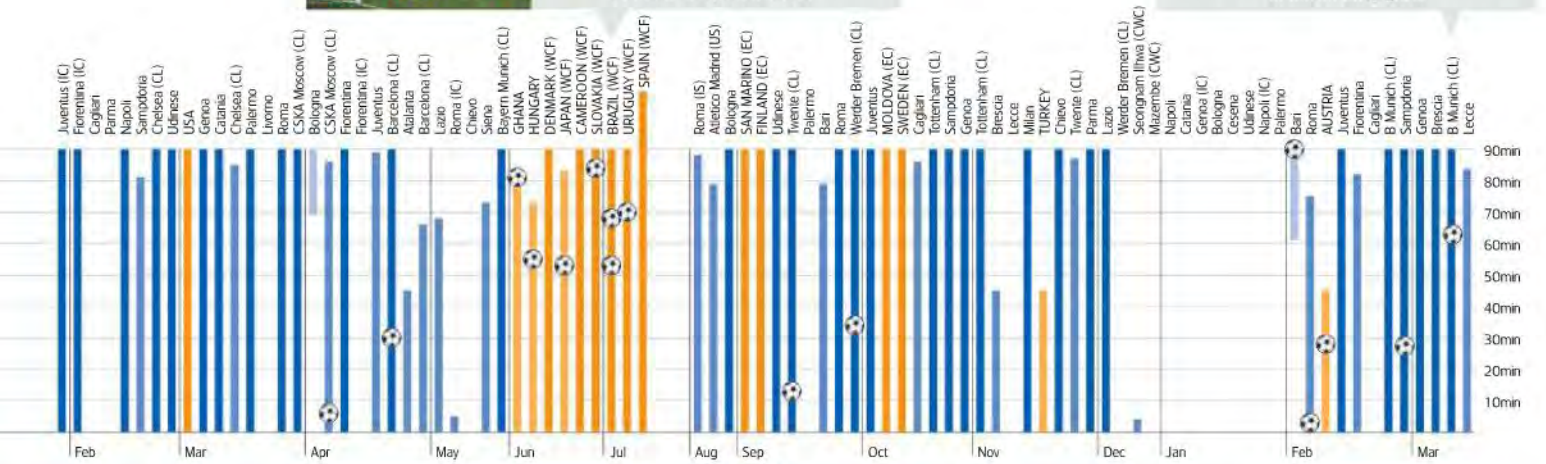
Only at Euro 2008, a tournament he lit up with his wonderful range of passing, waspish runs and goalscoring did he complete the long journey to national team fulcrum. And last year's World Cup, *Sneijdertje* (little Sneijder) turned on the style to inspire the *Oranje* to the Final and pick up two individual awards: second in the player of the competition ballot and joint-top scorer with five goals.

Proud as a peacock of his rare abilities and achievements, Sneijder has never been one to worry about his image, his effectiveness and definitely not his star quality. But even this most self-assured of characters has had moments of self-doubt, especially when Real Madrid declared him surplus to requirements in the summer of 2009. For the first time he tasted rejection and though he had good reason to feel embittered – he played well in his inaugural season at the Bernabeu and had his second ruined by ill-luck (divorce from first wife Ramona and three months on the sidelines with a knee injury), he had to take it on the chin and look to bounce back at Internazionale, whose coach Jose Mourinho had wooed him with repeated text messages.

You can't keep such an irrepressible character down for long, though, and, with thoughts of revenge coursing through his veins, last season turned out to be the best of his career to date, wreaking havoc as Inter recorded a wonderful clean sweep of Italian league, Cup and the Champions League. Lionel Messi may have clinched the 2010 Ballon d'Or, but the moral victor was Sneijder. **WS**

Jul 2, 2010 – scores two headers as Holland shock World Cup favourites Brazil in the quarter-finals.

Mar 15, 2011 – scores the second Inter goal in Munich as Inter beat Bayern 3-2 on the night to win on away goals.



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Old dog, new tricks

For all its faults, Jonathan Wilson believes that 4-4-2 is like the killer in a horror film: it will not die

Certain games change football history. In April 2000, Manchester United drew 0-0 with Real Madrid in the quarter-finals of the Champions League, which was seemingly an excellent result. But in the return at Old Trafford, Madrid swept into a 3-0 lead and, despite a late fightback, held on to win 3-2, ending United's reign as European champions.

Alex Ferguson vowed his team would never be so open again and, just a year after winning the treble, he set about re-assembling his side to play with a lone centre-forward. After the difficult Juan Sebastian Veron years, his vindication came with the back-to-back Champions League Finals of 2008 and 2009.

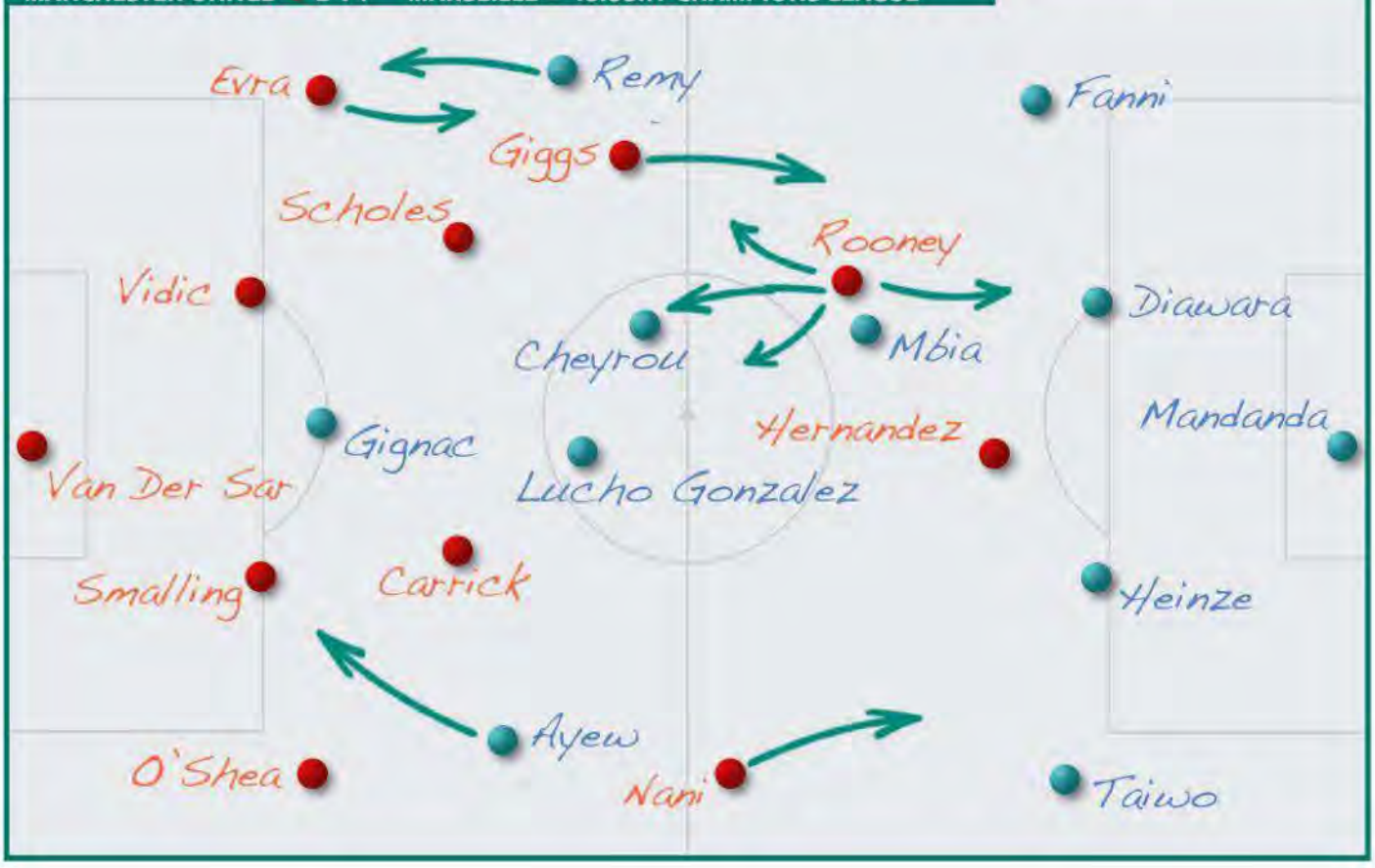
That quarter-final against Madrid is often misrepresented as Spanish flair overcoming English effort. United actually played very well and were probably a little unfortunate to lose on the night. Certainly, if a first-half goal-line handball from Aitor Karanka had been spotted and punished, as it should have been, with a penalty and a red card, United would probably have gone on to win. In isolation, the game could probably have been written off as one of those things: a great match between two sides playing well in which one caught a couple of breaks. But it formed part of a pattern.

Against Marseille, United's only slight nod to modernity was Rooney dropping deeper as a second striker of old would have done

In 1997 United had lost 1-0 away to Borussia Dortmund in the first leg of their semi-final, conceded an early goal in the return at Old Trafford and, knowing they had to score three to go through, Ferguson's side faltered. The following year they drew 0-0 at Monaco in the first leg of their quarter-final and again conceded early at Old Trafford. They equalised but went out on away goals.

Memories of those games were resurrected by United's last-16 tie against Marseille this season. Having drawn 0-0 away, United again faced the jeopardy of the away goal, which made for an anxious night at Old Trafford – even after United had gone 2-0 up. It surely was no coincidence that they had reverted, as a surprising number of English teams have this season, to 4-4-2. This is not the defensive version of the system, with two banks of four sitting deep and the forwards isolated high up the pitch, but an old-school variant with attacking wide men. The only slight nod to modernity was

MANCHESTER UNITED 2 v 1 MARSEILLE 15.03.11 CHAMPIONS LEAGUE



CHELSEA 2 v 1 MANCHESTER UNITED 01.03.11 PREMIER LEAGUE

Wayne Rooney dropping deeper, as a second striker of old – a Kenny Dalglish or a Teddy Sheringham - would have done, so the system at times resembled 4-2-3-1.

Here, though, were all the flaws of 4-4-2 as an offensive system. Going forward it can be devastating, flexible and fluid, with options wide and two central forwards to attack crosses. But it does leave a team open. A side playing 4-4-2 as United did is always likely to create scoring opportunities, but it will never have the control of a side that plays with an additional central midfielder. However much on top a team playing 4-4-2 may be, the possibility remains of leaving the centre-backs exposed and offering up a chance to the opposition.

All things being equal, that shouldn't matter; while that aggressive 4-4-2 may lend itself to winning games 3-1 rather than 2-0, in a league format it can still be confident of prevailing. In the second leg of a Champions League knockout tie, though, particularly after a goalless first leg, all things are not equal: away goals are worth more. Concede one chance and the home side needs to score two to avoid defeat.

Preventing the opposition creating chances becomes more important than creating chances yourself – which is, of course, why Arsene Wenger has complained that, in the days of easy continental travel, the away goals rule is outdated and militates against good football. It also explains why an attacking 4-4-2 is so rarely seen at the highest level; even Tottenham Hotspur ended up modifying their cavalier approach against Milan, using two deep-lying central midfielders to shield the back four – the only goal of the tie, notably, came when Milan, despite fielding three holding players, left their centre-backs exposed.

Chelsea have lacked fluency because all their midfielders seem better suited to 4-3-3. Lampard and Essien's surges need a holder behind them

Away from Europe such pressures don't exist and for the first time in years this season has seen 4-4-2 meet 4-4-2 in top-of-the-table games in the Premier League. It's not just United who have reverted, but Chelsea, Manchester City and Liverpool have also tried to accommodate new centre-forwards. The result has been a string of open, engaging games, particularly United's defeats by Chelsea and Liverpool, both of which felt like games from a couple of decades ago; unsophisticated perhaps, but packed with chances and incident.

What's a little odd about the adoption of 4-4-2 is that, of those four sides, only United seem to have the wide men to play the system comfortably. Liverpool are clearly a work in progress under Dalglish, who has proved himself far more of a tactical tinkerer than he was in his first spell of management, and tend to change shape according to the opposition. It is still undecided whether Dalglish will stay on next season, but whoever is in charge acquiring attacking width will be a priority.

At City, Carlos Tevez was linking so well with David Silva that the addition of a more orthodox central striker was always likely to be disruptive. Edin Dzeko should provide an alternative attacking option, and the question really is whether their wingers, who have been used to playing inverted and cutting in, can adjust to a more traditional role.

Fernando Torres has arrived at Chelsea out of form, which hasn't helped, but unless he is intended as a long-term replacement for Didier Drogba as the central forward in a 4-3-3, the squad requires major restructuring. Although they beat United, Chelsea have lacked fluency of late, largely because the midfielders in their squad all seem better suited to 4-3-3. Frank Lampard and Michael Essien's surges really need a holder behind them, while Ramires, more of a shuttler than a creative winger, is the only option on the right.

It has its flaws, but even for squads unsuited to it, 4-4-2 keeps on coming back, mutating and regenerating like the killer in some slasher film. WS

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XAVI

"Players like me were in danger of dying out"

It took the 2008 European Championship for the inspirational Barcelona and Spain midfielder to really make his name on the world stage but, as he points out, he has been playing that way for years

Xavi Hernandez smiles a little sheepishly. "Well," he says with a laugh, "I'm single". Yesterday, he admits, he watched five games – even though they weren't very good.

"I was watching Sampdoria-Juventus last night and it was awful, but I stuck with it. There's always something that catches your eye, some detail," he adds, apologetically, like an excuse. But that's the thing: he just can't help himself. Xavi loves football. *World Soccer's* Player of the Year for 2010 is obsessed with the game, a committed believer in a specific approach: the technical Barcelona and Spain approach that he represents better than anyone.

Xavi is an ideologue. Yet he is also a fan. He talks about Hoddle and Waddle, Ince and Keane, Scholes and Carrick, Terry and Carragher. His eyes light up when he remembers Matt Le Tissier. And he even starts chatting about Portsmouth and Real Oviedo.

So *World Soccer* does the logical thing and pulls up a chair...

Congratulations on winning *World Soccer's* Player of the Year award.
Thank you.

It's been quite a year with the World Cup and the Spanish league title, plus the 5-0 win over Real Madrid. Is this recognition at last? A few years ago, few people talked about you as the best player in the world. There was even that infamous headline in one English newspaper when you were in the top five for the FIFA World Player award: "The best players in the world (and Xavi)."
It's a pity. Not for me, but because of what it means. People have to focus a bit more on how things are done, not just on the final result. The result matters, of course, but people aren't looking at how a player plays – whether that's me or anyone else. They're looking at who wins. It's all about the result. I think that's a pity because football is more than that. People have discovered me since Euro 2008, but I've been playing the same way for years.

But you have improved, right?
In self-confidence. By winning, you take a weight off your shoulders, you convince yourself that you're doing things right. Before, it was a bit "aargh!" Now that we have won we have the tranquillity that allows us to enjoy our football, both with Spain and Barcelona. Winning has also served to make people re-evaluate our style, my style. It's not just about recognition, it's more than that. Honestly, I am very happy because, from an egotistical point of view, six years ago I was extinct as a player; footballers like me were in danger of dying out.

That's the point isn't it? This award is about more than just 2010, it is about you representing a type of game that, now at least, is seen as a winning approach. It is about three years in which you have won the European Championship, the European Cup, the World Cup...
A few years ago, we weren't winning. When a team starts winning you notice it. When a tennis player wins you look at him and ask why he wins. You don't look at him before that and ask what it is he has got [going for him]. The process only gets examined via the result. In football, sadly, no one looks at, for example, how is this [team/player] playing. No, they look at the results.
I understand that but I have a different perspective. Manchester United can lose but I will still like them. If they don't win, so what? I might like the way they play. The same for Liverpool or Bayern or Milan.

That's reflected in the Ballon d'Or: Inter won the treble, yet the top three were Barcelona players. And the top two in our award were too: you and Leo Messi. Yet football is played to win, more than to enjoy yourself, isn't it?
Of course. But in our case, I think the satisfaction is double. We want to win but we also want to do it playing well. Other teams, like Inter, win the Champions League and they are happy, of course. But there's not the same identity. Although, let's be clear, you can win that way too. I am not saying there is anything less valid about it, far from it, I'm just saying that we feel like there is something more, like there is something beyond just the victory. I am not saying Barcelona are better than other teams but we are different.

The stand out game this year was the *clasico*: your extraordinary 5-0 win against Real Madrid. Was that the best game you have ever played in?
I think so. Of course there are more important games like at the World Cup, the European Championship, the Final of the Champions League, but the feeling of superiority over Real Madrid was

On Pep Guardiola...

"When he took over I thought: '*Madre mia*, we're going to be flying'. He's intense, a perfectionist...and it's contagious"

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incredible. Against another team, fine, but Madrid? They didn't even touch the ball! It was fantastic. In the dressing room we were jumping and cheering and applauding. It was spectacular. We were standing up applauding ourselves – a standing ovation a minute long.

That must have been hard for Madrid's players to listen to afterwards...
Luckily, the two dressing rooms are some way apart. I don't think they heard it. And it was about our happiness, that's all.

There has been so much talk of La Masia, Barcelona's youth academy. What are the lessons there?
Most of our players are from Catalonia and have been here a long time. Education is the key. Players have had 10 or 12 years here. When you arrive at Barcelona the first thing they teach you is: think. Lift your head up, move your head, see, think. Look before you get the ball. If you're getting *this* pass, look to see if *that* guy is free. First time. Look at [Sergio] Busquets. Busquets is the best central midfielder there is playing one-touch. He doesn't need more. He controls, looks and passes in one touch. Some players need two or three touches and these days, given how physically demanding football is, how fast players are, that's too much.

Is the model exportable? Imagine we're running an English cub and we ask you to set up a youth system based on the Barcelona model. What do you do?
Look for talent. Look for a certain profile. Other teams look for power or physique. You play games in Catalonia at the age of 12 and Espanyol might well beat Barcelona 3-0, but it doesn't matter. You're not trying to win. From that Barcelona team, three players might make it; from the Espanyol team, maybe none. Don't worry about winning but about educating, teaching. Barcelona is more than that. You see a kid who lifts his head up, who plays the pass first time, and you think: "Yep, he'll do." Bring him here, let's coach him. And maybe not all youth academies do that. There are lots of people working for the system but [the idea] was Johan Cruyff's.

It's an Ajax model?
Yes. The truth is that our model is Dutch in part. Cruyff changed everything: "[He said] I want footballers who know how to play football."

What about the emotional side of the set up, the identity? You have names of former players on your lockers, don't you? That way you know exactly whose steps you are following in.
That was an idea that started with Angel Mur, the physio, who was at the club for years and years. And before him, his father was here. Between them they noted who had used which locker and put the names of the players on them. That said, now the dressing rooms have changed because they have been moved.

Eye on the ball...Xavi holds off Arsenal's Samir Nasri in this season's Champions League

It sometimes feels like Barcelona is not just a football thing; it's as if there is a sense of moral superiority too.
Barca for me is special, a feeling. I feel genuinely proud. People tell me we are a model for others. Team-mates in the Spanish national team, people who are at other clubs, say it: "*Hostia* [bloody hell], how well you lot play football!" Even [national team coach] Vicente Del Bosque says it. Things you don't see in the media, but that reach you. Beckenbauer came here the other day and told us how much he admired it and you think to yourself: "Wow, it's Beckenbauer. Or Platini."

And that's about more than just the result?
Yes. That's the kind of thing I will really take away from here. It's hard to explain, but it really means something. To be at Barcelona, to be a Barcelona fan, and to have people admire you for the way you play...

The pressure must be huge?
Yes, there's pressure. Lots of pressure.

How do you get rid of it?
By playing. When I have the ball I am happy. When I don't, pfff...

But there's a contradiction there: you're a player who always wants the ball, but as soon as you get it you give it away to a team-mate...
My game is seeing a free man and giving it to him. I think: "Bloody hell, the defender is here, so I've got to play it there." My team-mates make it easy for me, especially Dani Alves. *Madre mia*, the ground he covers! My football is passing but, if I have Dani, Iniesta, Pedro, Villa...there are so many options open to you. They're all available. Sometimes, I even think to myself: "One of them is going to get annoyed because I have played three passes in a row and I haven't given him the ball yet. *Hostia*. I better give the next one to Dani because he's gone up the wing three times now and I haven't given him a pass!" Leo, when he doesn't get involved in the game, it's like he gets annoyed. I think: "I'm going to have a word with him...and the next pass is for him." So I'm working out not only

where the space is but who's had passes from me!

I can see your kit man laying out your kit: shirt, shorts, socks, boots, pads, and a calculator...
Ha, yes, *hombre*, but they respect me: they don't get angry. But you do try to get them all involved.

You talk about your identification with Barcelona, yet you have had the chance to leave. There was Milan when you were 17...
My family were talking about it: "He's got to go." And I was thinking: "Me? Go? From here? What am I doing going to Italy?" It would have been harder, I would have had to adapt to another type of football, a type of football that is not my type. I thought: "I want to be here, at Barcelona." If I went to another team, I would still be thinking about Barca. Going to Italy would have been a mistake. Staying was the right decision.

There was also the chance of you leaving at the end of the Frank Rijkaard period...
Yes, after two years of not winning anything. Deco and Ronaldinho were going, and there was a rumour that reached me that said that the club wanted to sell me.

What did you think?
That, yeah, maybe it was time to go. We had gone two years without winning anything. The league was a disaster. We were 22 points behind Madrid and in the press that summer they talked about the possibility of me leaving. They were saying: "We could sell Xavi and raise the money to bring Cesc [Fabregas]." But then the European Championship happened, Pep Guardiola took over and he said to me: "Look, I can't even imagine a Barcelona team without you, I want you with me. I just don't see this team without you in it." And that was that. And then of course there's the fact that the club never said anything to me directly about selling me.

Could you have succeeded in England?
In the end, you adapt. Look at Xabi Alonso, he went to Liverpool and adapted. Mikel Arteta to Everton. Any good footballer, with talent, ends up adapting.

"Ah, but can you do it on a cold night in Stoke?" As if it's never cold against Numancia...
Yeah, exactly. Seriously, though, it's hard to leave Barcelona and I feel very much part of the club.

Does English football attract you?
Yes, I wouldn't have liked Italian football but I would have liked England. If there was an English team I liked it was Manchester United above all. English football is wonderful. I have never seen anything like it. We won 3-1 at Liverpool once and we were applauded off the pitch. In Spain that's starting to happen a little more now. Young fans who are becoming more committed to their clubs are making more noise: look at Espanyol, Athletic, Sevilla – there's something there. But it's England that most stands out.

Spanish players and coaches seem to really enjoy it in England...
There is not the same level of patience in Spain as there is in England. And those that coach in England appreciate that and are grateful for it. I think it should always be like that. Coaches need a couple of years. Or three, or more.

And the players?
They think it's brilliant. They all speak highly of it. In England football is more noble; there's less cheating. I would have loved it. Just going onto the pitch for United the fans respect you. In England the profession is respected. Here, the fans think you're shameless, you make a fortune and you don't care. Playing in England has also given a chance and the right conditions for Spanish players to develop. In England, a player who is a 7/10 becomes a 9/10. Fernando Torres is a superstar now. And look at Arteta at Everton.

You say coaches need three years. Pep Guardiola didn't...
Yeah, but Pep is incredible. When they signed him I said: "*Madre mia*, we're going to be flying." I swear it. He's a *pesado* [heavy-going, hard working, intense]. He's a perfectionist. If Pep decided to become a musician, he would be a good musician. If he wanted to be a psychologist, he would be a good psychologist. He is obsessive. He would keep going until he got it right. He demands so much from himself. And that pressure that he puts on himself, those demands are contagious – it spreads to everyone. I'm a bit like that and I can see it. He wants everything to be perfect.

Would Guardiola succeed in England, for example?
Pep would succeed anywhere. Intelligence is often expressed in terms of how well you adapt to where you are and to your circumstances, and Pep is very, very intelligent. He would adapt to any football anywhere, I am absolutely sure of that.

> "La Masia is about more than winning. You see a kid who lifts his head up and plays the pass first time and you think: 'Yep, he'll do' "

How does Guardiola's perfectionism express itself in your case? Do you live your life better than others?
Look, the thing is, I like football so much. I enjoy this. I like the demands, I like the game, I like trying to perfect things. I watch so much football. All of it. Everything!

Don't you get bored?
No. There are games that are boring, but, no, football doesn't bore me. I like to watch players. What's he like? What's he doing? What are they trying to achieve?

Is that analytical approach and enthusiasm the reason why Guardiola says that one day you're going to be a coach?
No, I don't see myself as a coach. Coaches live for a result – and all the more so in Spain where, like I say, there's no patience. Imagine that game in Gijon [Guardiola's third match in charge when Barcelona had not yet won and they could have slipped into the relegation zone]. Imagine we had lost that? You can just hear it: "Pep's no good, we're no good, this and that and the other." You get into a bad run and it all starts So no, no thanks. But I would certainly like to stay in the game in some way. I see myself more as a technical director than a coach.

How about director of the new La Masia?
Delighted. Where do I sign?
Interview by Sid Lowe and Pete Jenson

Picture: Svarcik.com

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Facetoface

PIERLUIGI COLLINA

"Refs have to know how teams play"

Widely acknowledged as one of the greatest referees of all time, the 51-year-old Italian is now passing on his expertise to today's match officials

You have said your aim, as UEFA's chief refereeing officer, is to limit errors, not achieve perfection. In that case, how would you stop Thierry Henry's infamous handball for France against the Republic of Ireland?
You still want to talk about that? It happened 18 months ago! My job is not to pronounce on incidents like that; my job is to try to find some way of ensuring that certain mistakes are reduced.

So what exactly are the objectives of your current role with UEFA?
Today the big question is background, preparation. There was a time when that meant knowing the rules and knowing the interpretation of the rules. Referees today must make the leap from being merely officials to becoming athletes because today's games are played at a much higher pace than previously. If you're tired you're not going to be lucid and it is much more likely that you will make a mistake. You must also know a team tactically to reduce the surprise effect. The objective is to try to know the teams well enough so as to be able to predict the way things will go. For example, if I know a team uses a 4-3-3 line-up then I know the play will develop very differently from a team playing with a 4-3-1-2 line-up. Likewise, you can know that one team plays the offside trap just outside its penalty area, while another plays it much higher, 10 yards closer to the halfway line. You've also got to know the characteristics of the players. For example, a lot of coaches with three men up front like to play a left footer on the right wing and a right footer on the left wing so that when they cut inside the players are on their best foot. If I know this then I can expect the winger to cut inside more often than head for the byline. If I know things like this then I can be ready. I don't expect the guy to put crosses into the area, but rather to cut inside and play "one-twos" on the edge of the area with the central striker.

Being fully prepared leads to better positioning...
Let me give you another example. Take Spain and the USA, for example, at the Confederations Cup [in 2009]. Spain played twice as many passes as the USA. What does this mean? Basically, that Spain play a "tick-tock, tick-tock" possession game, with lots of square passes, so the referee needs to be careful not to get in front of the game. It is the opposite with the USA because they use the long ball and you have to be ready for them to hit a 60-yard pass or you can find yourself 50 yards behind the action. If one of my referees has to handle a big game, he has to know how both teams play, be familiar with their systems.

What other specific issues are crucial to a referee's preparation?
Peripheral vision. Thanks to Spanish experts, we have developed a series of exercises and tests that can help referees improve their peripheral vision. Goalkeepers need to use the same system as they have got to be trained not just to watch the cross coming into their area but also the movements of opposing strikers. There are exercises to improve this. The next time you are stopped at traffic lights, try noting the colour of the clothes worn by the people about to cross.

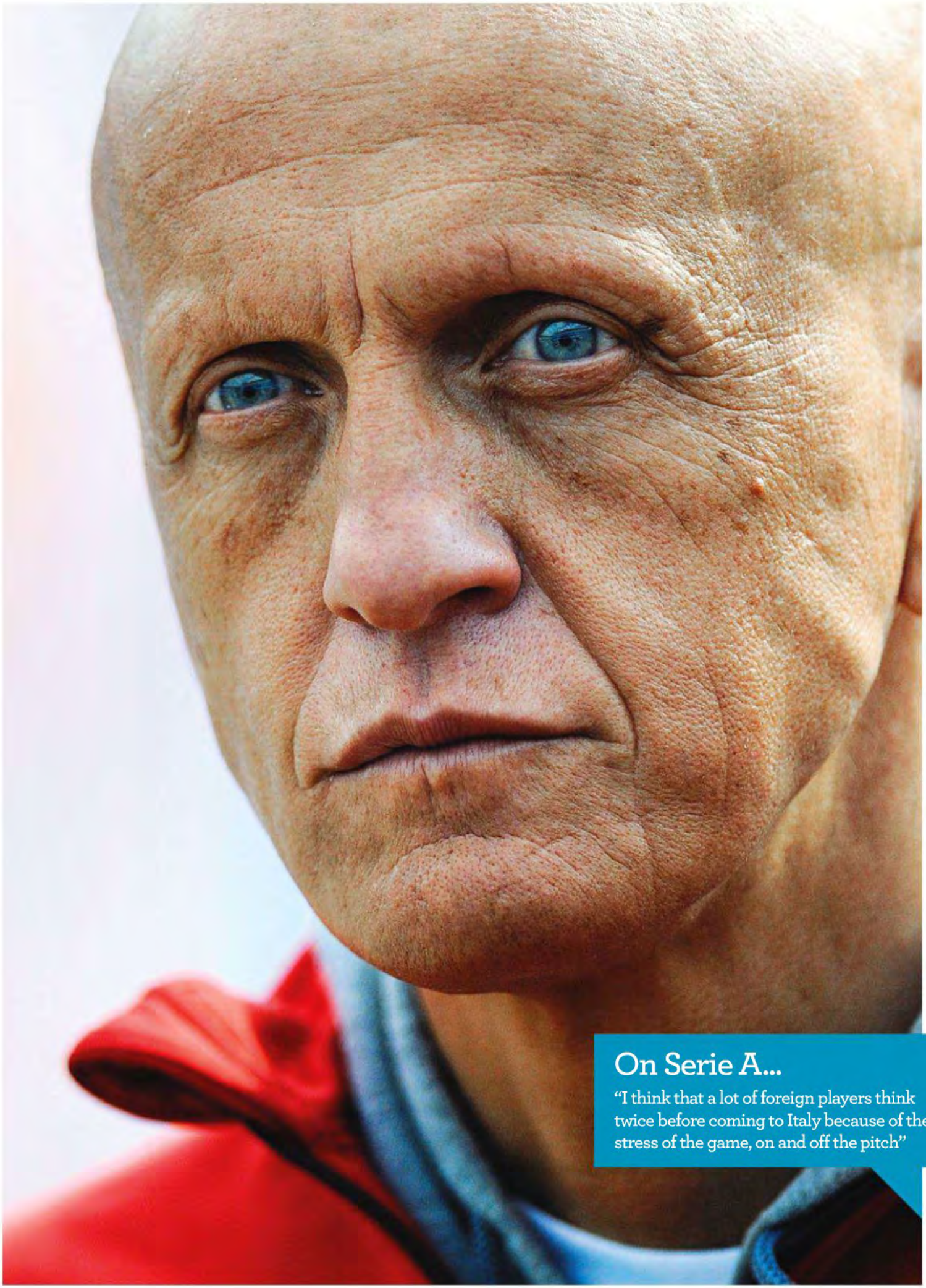
You obviously watch a lot of games, but how important is it to see the game live rather than on TV?
Obviously, there are certain things you see on TV that you don't see at the stadium and vice versa. The great thing for me about TV is that, sitting at home, I can see six games in two days, whereas if I travel somewhere, at best I see two games in two days. Obviously, though, there is a major sense in which it is more important to be at the stadium in that my focus is on the referee whereas the TV camera's focus is on the game, the ball. If I'm at the stadium I get a much better assessment of the referee's reactions.

How do you view possible technological innovations?
It will obviously be the International Football Association Board which will decide on this technology, not me. My job is to apply their decisions on the field of play. In the Europa League last season and the Champions League this season we have used two extra referees – an experiment that has given very interesting results – so UEFA now would like goal-line referees at the 2012 European Championship in Ukraine and Poland.

How do you see Italian football at the moment?
Sometimes in Italy we fail to appreciate the spectacular nature of football. Let me give you an example, from two matches I watched recently: Koln v Bayern Munich, a game that went from 2-0 for Bayern to a final 3-2 for Koln, and Newcastle v Arsenal, a match that went from 4-0 for Arsenal to 4-4. People were enthusiastic and excited about those games, delighted with the spectacle. On that same weekend in Italy we had Inter beating Roma 5-3. Yet, listening to the analysis of that game next day in Italy, all I heard was people complaining about mistakes. I think you should be focusing on the spectacle, pointing out the good things that teams did. That's why people go to the stadium, that's what gets them involved in football. Unfortunately, in Italy we often forget the primary impact of football and go looking for something negative. This is a big limitation.

Does this limitation hurt Italian football?
I don't know, but what I would say is that Italian football is very demanding. I think that a lot of foreign players think twice before coming to Italy because of the stress of the game, on and off the pitch.

Interview by Paddy Agnew



On Serie A...

"I think that a lot of foreign players think twice before coming to Italy because of the stress of the game, on and off the pitch"

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ClubFocus

NAPOLI

Pride of the Mezzogiorno

Napoli, for so long a symbol of Italy's under-developed south, are set to qualify for next season's Champions League. Paddy Agnew reports on their resurgence

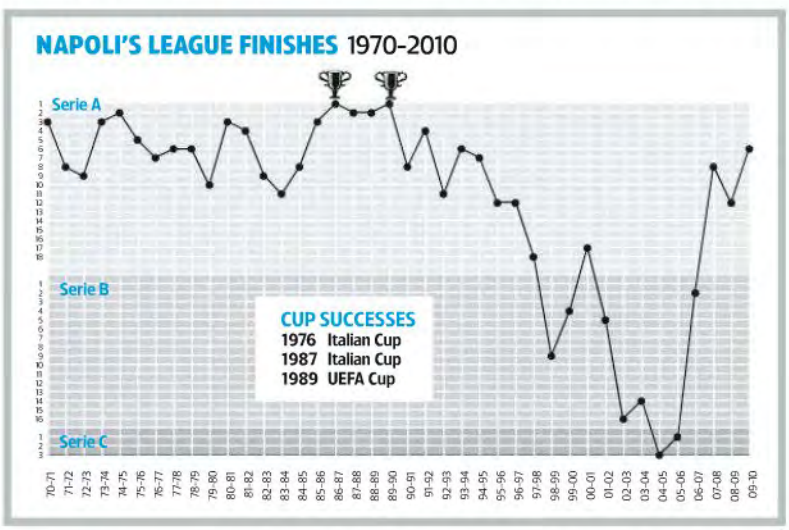
Early in March, Napoli owner, cinema producer Aurelio De Laurentiis, summoned the media. He had a few things he wanted to get off his chest.

For a start, he said, he sometimes has the sensation that the "powers that be" in Italian football are not all on Napoli's side.

"Whatever way you look at it, Napoli is a reality that annoys people," claimed De Laurentiis. "We get in the way, as do Lazio, Roma and Palermo.

"Now, if they want to have a three-club championship, well they can organise that among themselves."

De Laurentiis' comments had been prompted by recent refereeing decisions which included a controversial penalty against them in their top-of-the-table clash with Milan (which they lost 3-0),



Southern passion...Napoli's Edinson Cavani stretches to get in his shot in a Serie A game against Brescia at San Paolo

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a three-day suspension for Argentinian striker Ezequiel Lavezzi (after a spitting incident in Napoli's 2-0 away win against Roma) and two penalties not given in a 0-0 home draw with Brescia.

Such complaints are nothing new. They represent a revival of the old north-south rivalry, with the allegation being that the north likes nothing better than to fix the cards in its favour. In case you have not already worked it out, the "three clubs" who should play out the championship contest among themselves are, of course, Milan, Internazionale and Juventus.

More than a club

For all of their remarkable history since being founded in 1926, Napoli – with respect to Barcelona and their fans – have always been much more than a football club, becoming a banner for the under-developed, organised-crime-ridden *Mezzogiorno* (the south) of Italy.

Not for nothing, even after a tumultuous decade which saw the club go bankrupt and sink to the Italian equivalent of division three, Napoli are still one of the great powerhouses of Italian football, both in terms of its passionate support and its turnover. A market survey of Italian clubs by Demos & Pi last autumn claimed that only the big three have more fans than Napoli. Furthermore, in terms of revenue, Napoli are currently the sixth biggest club in Serie A.

In Naples, fan fever has always blown hot and heavy. So strong was the interest in a 1929 Napoli v Lazio play-off for Serie A that Neapolitan sports paper *Mezzogiorno Sportivo* invented one of the earliest ever "live" match reports. Basically, a reporter from the paper, who was at the game in Milan, phoned back minute-by-minute reports to his Naples office. These were then written up by another journalist and passed on to yet another reporter who then read them out to a crowd from the office balcony.

Many of the great names to have been associated with Napoli have not hesitated to play the "southern" card. In his seminal work, *Calcio*, author John Foot points out how the shipbuilding millionaire Achille Lauro used his ownership of the club

Flying the flag...a trader sells his wares outside San Paolo

> "If they want a three-club championship they can organise it among themselves"
> Napoli owner Aurelio De Laurentiis

THE POWER CURVE

The key figures behind Napoli

AURELIO DE LAURENTIIS

In the great tradition of the industrial baron, the cinema tycoon calls all the shots and tends to call them well. His investment in Napoli has gone better than expected, but his cup of happiness will be overflowing if the club can earn themselves a Champions League place.

WALTER MAZZARRI

The former Livorno, Reggina and Sampdoria coach has so far handled the explosive mix of Napoli fans, De Laurentiis and wayward talent such as striker Ezequiel Lavezzi with remarkable poise.

ANDREA CHIAVELLI

The commercial manager is a key figure in De Laurentiis' parent company Filmauro and acts as a sort of financial controller.

RICCARDO BIGON

Involved in day-to-day running and in transfers as sports director. Son of Alberto Bigon, coach of 1990 Maradona-inspired champions.

EDISON CAVANI

He might not be Maradona (who is?), but there have been times this season when the Uruguay striker has turned on all the lights at the San Paolo.

MAREK HAMSIK

Giovanni Trapattoni says that the current Napoli attack of Cavani, Lavezzi and Hamsik is "second to none".

Whipping up a storm...Napoli fans get in the mood before a game against Milan from the hated north

(from the 1930s through to the 1960s) to promote his own political career. Lauro was a feudal-style mayor of Naples for most of the 1950s and 1960s, often sparking Neapolitan and southern pride with attacks on both the north and central government.

Lauro's election slogan of "A Great Naples For A Great Napoli" illustrates just how easily this pre-Berlusconi tycoon mixed football and politics. Foot recalls the infamous Napoli v Bologna game in November 1955 when the Napoli fans invaded the pitch at the final whistle, outraged that referee Mario Maurelli had awarded Bologna a last-minute penalty that enabled them to snatch a 3-3 draw after being 3-0 down.

In the heated debate that followed this incident, Lauro strongly defended the Napoli fans, saying that they were "a good and generous people who tend to rise up against injustice and arrogance". He even went on to roundly criticise the referee, blaming the violence on a poor decision, even though Lauro himself had left the San Paolo stadium 15 minutes before the end when the score was still 3-0.

Fifty-six years later, not a lot has changed and Napoli fans still regularly make headlines for all the wrong reasons. Pitch invasions at the modern San Paolo (rebuilt for the 1990 World Cup) are not possible, but what can be made of the events which saw Napoli fans commandeer a Rome-bound train in Naples central station at the beginning of the 2008-09 season?

The fans had wanted to travel for Napoli's opening game, away to Roma. More worrying than their behaviour, however, were claims from senior Italian police officers that the camorra, the Neapolitan mafia, was directly or indirectly involved in the violence.

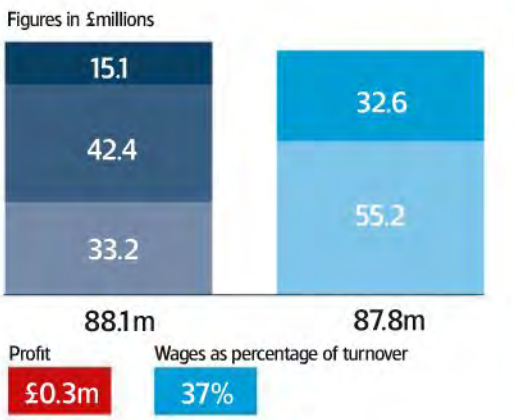
Diverting accusations

That alleged camorra link is nothing new. It famously dogged Diego Maradona during his Napoli days. Diego, though, was good at diverting those accusations, often pressing the same "downtrodden south, match-fixing north" button. He even used it on the eve of the Italy v Argentina 1990 World Cup semi-final in Naples, deriding the attempts of local politicians and VIPs to encourage Neapolitans to support their country against their much-worshipped Maradona.

"For 364 days of the year they treat you like dirt and then they ask you to come out and support them," said the Argentinian.

Even the two titles won by the Maradona-inspired Napoli, in 1987 and 1990, have not eliminated the sensation that for much of the time the cards are fixed against the south. Partially, that

PROFIT AND LOSS 2009-10



WEALTH CHECK: LOOKING UP

Napoli were one of four Serie A clubs (the others were Fiorentina, Catania and Livorno) to have made a profit in the 2009-2010 season. With revenues of about €101million (£88.1m), and costs of €99.6m (£87.8m) they returned a modest profit of £302,000. In terms of income, they are the sixth-largest Italian club. The wage bill was £32.6m in 2009-10 but was reduced to about £24.9m for this season. If revenues increase – and qualifying for the Champions League will help – the wages-to-turnover ratio (currently 37 per cent) will drop even lower. Last season Napoli earned more than £42m from TV rights and doubled their annual merchandising income to £4m. Sponsorship totalled £18.4m.

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Tug of love...Marek Hamsik gets the treatment after scoring against Roma

explains why Neapolitan pride has stood by the club during the roller-coaster ride of the last 20 years which has seen Napoli go from winning the Serie A title and the UEFA Cup to being relegated to Serie C1 via bankruptcy along the way.

De Laurentiis is the man who has put the club back on the international map, spending £25million in 2004 to take over a heavily debt-ridden club. That investment has turned out to be a winner, given that in three straight seasons Napoli were back up in Serie A, and that by the end of 2009 were returning a £9.5m profit, based essentially on TV rights, advertising contracts and box-office takings. This season Napoli have recorded average home gates of 43,000, with a peak of 58,000 for the visit of Juventus.

Best year

The rise and revival of Napoli continues apace with the club this season enjoying easily their best year in the modern era. Even if their Europa League run came unstuck against Villarreal, Napoli are currently travelling well in Serie A, with a top-four finish and a consequent place in next season's Champions League looking a distinct possibility. Little wonder that De Laurentiis told *Gazzetta Dello Sport*: "Four years ago we weren't even listed in the UEFA rankings. Three years ago, we were 300-and-something. Now we are 29th. That has to mean that, starting at the bottom, we've worked well."

An encouraging word for Napoli came recently from an unexpected source in the person of Giovanni Trapattoni, manager of the Republic of Ireland and someone whose past links to Juventus, Inter and Milan would make him a prime candidate as a northern "enemy".

Yet *Il Trap* believes Napoli could lift the title, saying: "It can be an advantage not to be the favourites, and [coach Walter] Mazzari's Napoli remind me greatly of the Verona miracle side that won the title [in 1985] thanks as much to a wave of emotion as to anything."

Down in Naples, whatever else may be lacking, they are not short on emotion. WS

THE SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS

Morgan DE SANCTIS

Age 34 (26.03.77)
First-choice who was the reserve keeper at Juventus in late 1990s before moving on to Udinese. Spread his wings with a move to Sevilla in 2008 and then on to Galatasaray before joining Napoli in the summer of 2009.

Matteo GIANELLO

Age 34 (07.05.76)
Played most of his career in Serie B with Chievo and Siena before joining Napoli in 2004.

Gennaro IEZZO

Age 37 (08.06.73)
Previously with Nocerina, Verona, Catania and Cagliari, he was first choice in the promotion seasons of 2005-06 and 2006-07 but has since lost out to De Sanctis.

DEFENDERS

Salvatore ARONICA

Age 33 (20.01.78)
Left-sided defender who has been a regular in Serie A since 2004 and with Napoli since 2008. Previously with Crotone, Ascoli, Messina and Reggina. With Juventus as a teenager in late 1990s.

Hugo CAMPAGNARO (Arg)

Age 31 (27.01.80)
Centre-back who has been a regular since joining from Sampdoria in 2008. Previously with Piacenza, who he joined from Argentinian second-tier side Deportivo Moron in 2002.

Paolo CANNAVARO

Age 29 (26.07.81)
Club captain and former Italy Under-21 international who rejoined his boyhood club from Parma in 2006. A cente-back like his elder brother, Italy's 2006 World Cup-winning captain Fabio.

MIDFIELDERS

Manuele BLASI

Age 30 (17.08.80)
Much travelled former *Azzurri* midfielder (previous clubs include Lecce, Roma, Perugia, Parma, Juventus, Fiorentina) who spent last season at Palermo. Title winner with Juventus in 2005, he tested positive for nandrolone with Parma in 2003.

Walter GARGANO (Uru)

Age 26 (23.07.84)
Defensive midfielder who has been a regular since joining from Danubio in 2007. A member of Uruguay's 2010 World Cup squad, he was in the starting line-up for the semi-final against Holland.

Marek HAMSIK (Slk)

Age 23 (27.07.87)
One of Europe's most coveted midfielders, the spiky-haired maker and taker of chances joined from Brescia in 2007 having played only a handful of games for Slovan Bratislava. Key figure in Slovakia's 2010 World Cup qualification.

FORWARDS

Edinson CAVANI (Uru)

Age 24 (12.02.87)
A member of Uruguay's World Cup squad who has been outstanding at times this season. Joined Napoli in the summer after 34 goals in 109 appearances for Palermo. The deal was initially a loan but will become permanent this summer. Began his career with Danubio.

Nicolao DUMITRU

Age 19 (12.10.91)
Italy Under-20 international who joined from Empoli in the summer. Born in Sweden but his family moved to Italy when he was young.

Ezequiel LAVEZZI (Arg)

Age 25 (03.05.85)
Argentina international signed from San Lorenzo in 2007. His recent three-match suspension saw Napoli drop five out of a possible nine points. When he came back, against Parma, he was crucial in a 3-1 win.

Home kit

Second kit

Third kit

THE COACH

Walter MAZZARRI

Age 49 (01.10.61)
A former journeyman midfielder who had a spell in Serie A with Empoli in the 1980s but has been far more successful as a coach. Guided Livorno into Serie A for the first time in 2004 and then kept Reggina in the top flight before moving on to Sampdoria, where he oversaw a sixth-placed finish in 2008. Joined Napoli in October 2009, replacing former Italy coach Roberto Donadoni, who was fired after six months in charge.

Emilson CRIBARI (Bra)

Age 31 (06.03.80)
Tough central defender who spent five seasons with Empoli and the same again with Lazio before joining Napoli last summer after a short spell with Siena.

Andrea DOSSENA

Age 29 (11.09.81)
Attack-minded left-back finding his form again after a disappointing spell at Liverpool. Previously with Verona, Treviso and Udinese. Capped 10 times by Italy and played in 2009 Confederations Cup.

Victor RUIZ (Spa)

Age 22 (25.01.89) Spain
Joined from Espanyol in January as a replacement for injured veteran Gianluca Grava. Sent off for Spain Under-21s last year after punching a Denmark player for his goal celebration.

Fabiano SANTACROCE

Age 24 (24.08.86)
Former Italy Under-21 centre-back who joined from Brescia in January 2008. Born in Brazil to an Italian father and Brazilian mother, and raised in Italy. Called up to the senior Italy squad but has yet to make his debut.

Juan Camilo ZUNIGA (Col)

Age 25 (14.12.85)
Versatile wing-back in his second season with Napoli after a year with Siena following a transfer from Nacional of Medellin.

Christian MAGGIO

Age 29 (11.02.82)
Right-back or wing-back who joined from Sampdoria in 2008. Previously with Vicenza, Fiorentina and Treviso. A member of Italy's 2010 World Cup squad.

Michele PAZIENZA

Age 30 (05.08.82)
A regular since joining from Fiorentina in 2008. Previously with Foggia and Udinese. Recently linked with a move away from the club following a training-ground altercation with fans.

Jose Ernesto SOSA (Arg)

Age 25 (19.06.85)
Attacking midfielder signed last summer following a spell back home with first club Estudiantes after two years on the fringes at Bayern Munich. A key figure for Estudiantes when they won the 2006 Argentina apertura.

Luigi VITALE

Age 23 (05.10.87)
Left-sided midfielder or wing-back who is one of the few home-grown players in the squad. Back in Naples after spending last season on loan at Livorno but edged out of first-choice contention by Dossena.

Hassan YEBDA (Alg)

Age 26 (14.05.84) Algeria
Combative midfielder who joined from relegated Portsmouth last summer. Born in France but opted to play for Algeria at last year's World Cup. A product of Auxerre's youth system, he made a Ligue 1 breakthrough at Le Mans.

Cristiano LUCARELLI

Age 35 (04.10.75)
Much-travelled striker who came to prominence during four seasons at Livorno before an ill-fated spell at Shakhtar Donetsk. Broke into the Italy side while at Livorno and also attracted controversy for his support of left-wing ultras.

Giuseppe MASCARA

Age 31 (22.08.79)
Joined from Catania in the January transfer window. Previously much travelled in the lower divisions. Mostly used as a second striker. Played once for Italy, a 2009 friendly against Northern Ireland.

THE STADIUM

SAN PAOLO

With a current capacity of 60,240, Napoli's home is the third-largest football stadium in Italy, after the San Siro and Rome's Stadio Olimpico. Built in 1959, it underwent extensive renovations in 1989 for the 1990 World Cup and staged the Italy-Argentina semi-final. Prior to moving here, Napoli played at the Ascarelli Stadium (which was named after the club's founder, Giorgio Ascarelli) and then at the Arturo Collana stadium (named after a former president).

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Talentscout

WALLYSON

COUNTRY	Brazil
CLUB	Cruzeiro
POSITION	Winger
AGE	22 (17.10.88)
PREVIOUS CLUBS	ABC, Atletico Paranaense
HONOURS	2007 Rio Grande do Norte state championship; 2009 Parana state championship

There was no doubt about the most eye-catching clash in the first week of the Libertadores Cup: Cruzeiro of Brazil at home to Estudiantes of Argentina. It was a replay of the 2009 Final – but with a very different result.

Two years ago Estudiantes came out on top; this time a potentially tough clash was over after 54 seconds – the time it took Wallyson, with the aid of a deflection, to put the Brazilian side ahead.

The inclusion of the 22-year-old was a brave decision by Cruzeiro coach Cuca as it meant leaving out Thiago Ribeiro, the top scorer in last year's Libertadores. But Cuca was keen to go into the continental competition with a 4-2-3-1 formation and he felt that Wallyson's characteristics made him ideal for the wide-right role. "I'm not a penalty-area player," says Wallyson. "I work better down the flanks. I'm quick and never give up."

Under new coach Eduardo Berizzo, the Argentinians tried to press high and left acres of space behind them for Wallyson to run riot. He rounded off the 5-0 win with an involuntary second goal when the ball struck him six feet from goal, but it was a just reward for the diagonal run he had made to get on the end of a cross from the opposite flank.

Cruzeiro's next game in the competition was a 4-0 win at home to Guarani of Paraguay, but while the scoreline looked comfortable, the reality was very different. The visitors had created the clearer chances until Wallyson took the game away from them with the opening two goals to prove he is more than just a wide flyer. The first was a volley through a crowded penalty area after a corner was cleared, and, for his second, following a short corner, he brought a cross under control and scored with his weaker left foot.

Four goals in his first two games is an unbelievable beginning to the Libertadores for a player who made a sensational start to his professional career. In 2007, at the age of 18, he was the tournament's top scorer and scored four goals in the Final as ABC of Natal won the Rio Grande do Norte state title. His goals then carried the club into the second division at national level and earned him promotion to the top flight as he took the long trip south to join Atletico Paranaense.

A foot injury slowed his progress and a contract dispute ended his time with the Curitiba club, after which the HAZ Sports Agency acquired part of his registration and agreed a partnership deal with Cruzeiro, for whom he made his debut in August last year.

The objective is presumably to profit from a sale abroad, and success in the Libertadores is the ideal way to put himself in the shop window.

Tim Vickery

> Four goals in two games is an unbelievable beginning to the Libertadores for a player who made a sensational start to his pro career

Tim MATAVZ

COUNTRY	Slovenia
CLUB	Groningen (Hol)
POSITION	Centre-forward
AGE	22 (13.01.89)
PREVIOUS CLUBS	Gorica, Emmen (loan, Hol)
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	June 2010, v New Zealand
INTERNATIONAL CAPS	8 (3 goals)
FUTURE DESTINATION	Napoli, summer 2011, deal agreed

Lined up to move to Napoli this summer for £5.9million, Groningen's prolific Slovenian spearhead Tim Matavz has done amazingly well for someone who not so long ago seemed damaged goods.

For his first two years at Groningen, who he joined as an 18-year-old from leading Slovenian side Gorica in 2007, Matavz's career was undermined by a singular lack of goals, a poor attitude and an injury-riddled loan spell at second division Emmen.

However, the management at Groningen stuck by him and in the past 18 months he has dug himself out of a very deep hole, scoring 13 times in the Eredivisie last season and having already surpassed that figure this term as the northern Dutch club have forced their way into the top four.

While favourable circumstances – Groningen's sale of Sweden star striker Marcus Berg to Hamburg in the summer of 2009 and a number of other forwards out with injury – have undoubtedly played their part in helping Matavz establish himself in the green-and-whites' first-team, he still had to make the most of his opportunities.

Matavz certainly looks to have the tools to deliver on the Serie A stage. He shoots accurately and powerfully with both feet, is very composed in front of goal, has no problem holding the ball up, and uses every centimetre of his 6ft 2in frame to dominate in the air. Arguably his most impressive trait is his movement in and around the box, but his mobility can also work against him as he often retreats too deep in search of the ball.

A member of his country's World Cup 2010 squad – although he only played for 11 fleeting minutes, in the group-phase loss to England – the 22-year-old has since moved up a couple of rungs in the national-team hierarchy, and in October he struck a hat-trick in a Euro 2012 qualifier against the Faroes Islands – becoming the youngest Slovenian ever to do so.

Nick Bidwell

Emmanuel EMENIKE

COUNTRY	Nigeria
CLUB	Karabukspor (Tur)
POSITION	Centre-forward
AGE	23 (10.05.87)
PREVIOUS CLUBS	FC Cape Town (SAf)
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	February 2011, v Sierra Leone
INTERNATIONAL CAPS	1 (0 goals)
LINKED WITH	Besiktas, Fenerbahce, Galatasaray, several Russian clubs

Following much speculation that the Turkish federation had naturalisation designs on him, Karabukspor's free-scoring striker Emmanuel Emenike finally decided to answer the call of his homeland. He made his Nigeria debut in February's friendly in Lagos against Sierra Leone.

Suggesting that he had been shabbily treated by Nigerian football officials in the past, the 23-year-old initially declared he was tempted by a change of passport. Yet it quickly became clear that the Turks were engaged in wishful thinking. FIFA rules stipulate that a player must have five years of continuous residence in the country he wishes to switch to and Emenike had only been in the country for 20 months.

Turkey's interest in the Nigerian can be easily understood. Thanks to his muscular build and explosive acceleration, he is about as easy to stop as a boulder rolling down a mountainside, and to gift-wrap the package he comes complete with above-average dribbling ability, a stinging shot in his right foot and an instinct for being in the right place in the box at the right time. Some have likened him to Daniel Amokachi, who played in two World Cups in the 1990s for the "Super Eagles" and also spent three years in Turkey, with Besiktas – and it's a view with more than a little validity.

Certainly Turkey has proved a happy hunting ground for Emenike. Since arriving at Karabukspor in the summer of 2009 he has been constantly among the goals, netting 16 times last season to help his club win the second division title and adding a further 13 in his first season in the top flight.

Nick Bidwell

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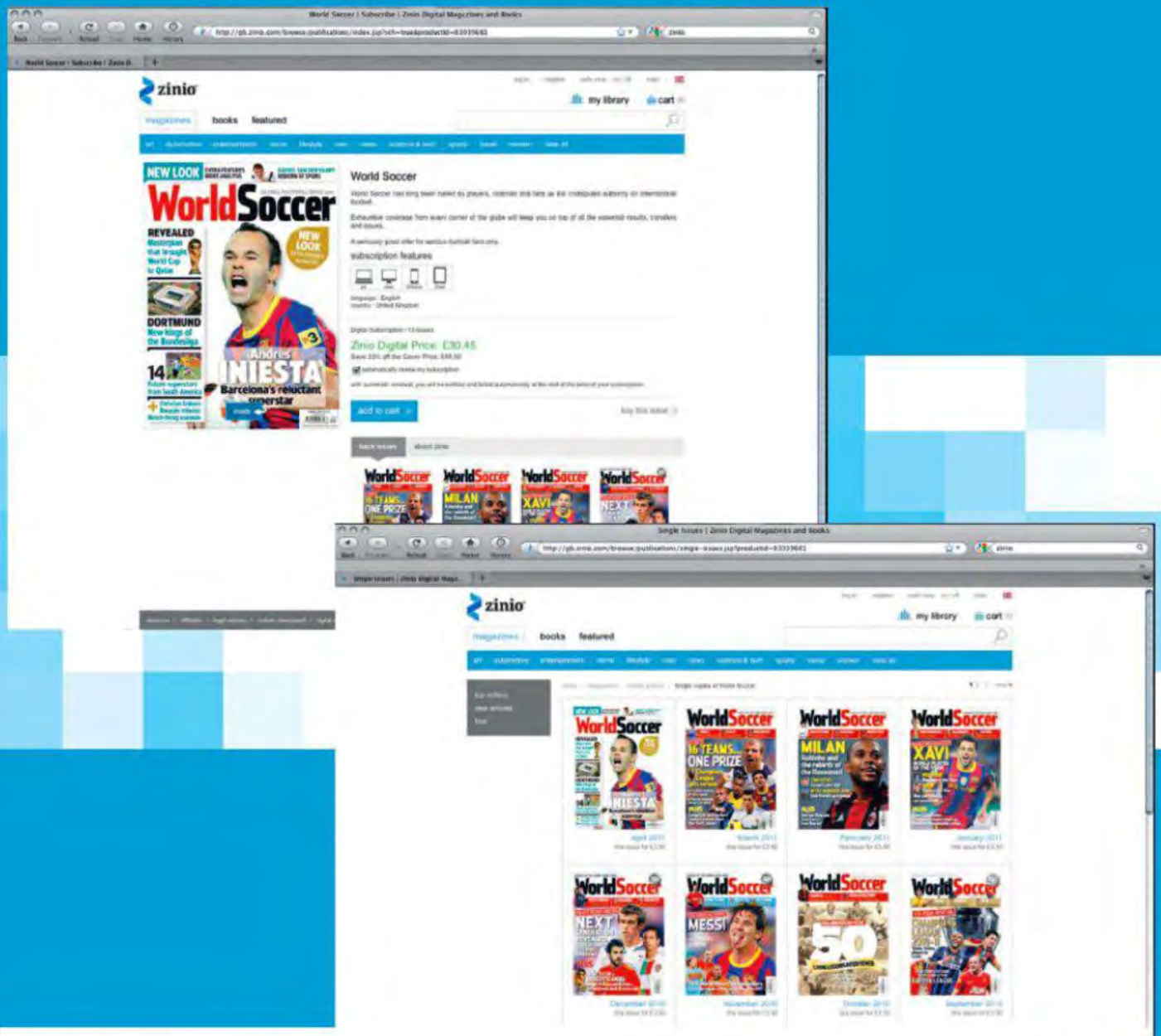

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Anas SHARBINI

COUNTRY	Croatia
CLUB	Hajduk Split
POSITION	Midfielder
AGE	24 (21.02.87)
PREVIOUS CLUB	Rijeka
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	October 2009 v Qatar
INTERNATIONAL CAPS	1 (0 goals)

Often compared with Balkan superstars Zvonimir Boban and Dejan Savicevic, Hajduk Split attacking midfielder Anas Sharbini is undoubtedly one of Croatia's brightest prospects. He possesses many of the illustrious pair's top-of-the-range characteristics, not least their innate elegance, elusive dribbling skills, delicate touch and cinemascope vision.

When on song, Sharbini – the son of a Palestinian father and a Croat mother – can be quite irrepressible, influencing proceedings with the same class and vista as his idol, the Italian playmaker Francesco Totti, and always looking to snipe and create behind enemy lines. But as anyone who knows him well will tell you, he is also bewilderingly prone to inconsistency, capable of going from centre-stage to no man's land in the blink of an eye.

> "Gifted players usually are free spirits... if he wasn't, Anas wouldn't be half as imaginative"
> **Hajduk team-mate and brother, Ahmad Sharbini**

Although considered mature enough to skipper hometown club Rijeka in the Croat top-flight at the age of just 20, he is regularly hammered by critics for his prima donna attitude and sometimes gives the impression that he has nothing left to learn. Players of his rare ability tend to be indulged and, ultimately, the kid gloves treatment has done him no favours.

Detractors remember only too well how, in 2008, he was kicked out of the Croat Under-21 team and heavily fined for refusing to play in a game against Hungary. He had never got on with Under-21 boss Drazen Ladic and the coach was left fuming when, just a few months later, the national-team head coach Slaven Bilic included him in his Euro 2008 waiting list, in case of any injuries to his squad.

"By picking Sharbini, Slaven Bilic has ridden roughshod over the Croatian Federation's value system," stormed Ladic. "If a player causes problems with the Under-21s, he simply does not deserve to be called up to the seniors."

Now in his second season at Hajduk, Anas is not the only Sharbini to be featuring for Split's finest; his elder brother, Ahmad, plays up front for the club and insists that whatever his young sibling's maverick ways, the good far outweighs the bad.

"Gifted players usually are free spirits and that's what my brother is," says Ahmad. "If he wasn't, he wouldn't be half as imaginative."

Nick Bidwell

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Brazil

Beautiful problem

Political wrangles have held back the national league and are impacting on the country's hosting of the 2014 World Cup. **Tim Vickery reports**

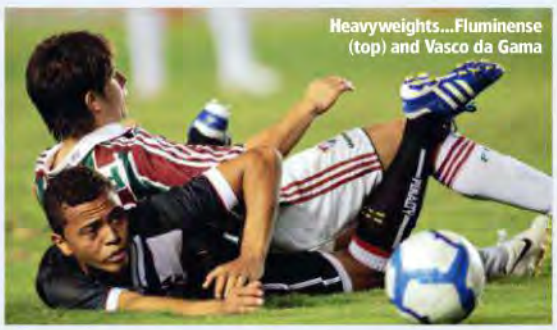
If there is one country outside Europe that has everything in place to host one of the world's major championships that nation must surely be Brazil.

Firstly there is the country's unrivalled footballing tradition, the depth of the game's roots and the ever-busy production line of wonderfully talented players. Then there is the size of the place, both in terms of population (approaching 200 million) and the number of well-established clubs.

Added to these factors is the idea that Brazil's most popular teams can count their followers in the millions – which makes them very interesting to sponsors seeking to reach a mass market – along with the growth of the economy, plus the recent strength of the local currency, which has enabled clubs to bring back big, established stars from Europe and to hang on to their starlets for a while longer.

Incidentally, if the current financial climate stays the same until 2014, supporters from abroad travelling to

BRIEFING



Heavyweights...Fluminense (top) and Vasco da Gama

FORMAT

The national championship (Campeonato Brasileiro Serie A) runs from May until December and follows on immediately after the 27 individual state championships.

The top three in the national league, plus the Brazilian Cup winners, qualify for the following year's Libertadores Cup. If no Brazilian club secures Liberatadores Cup qualification by winning that year's Sudamericana Cup, the country's fifth Libertadores spot goes to the side that finishes fourth in the national championship.

Four teams are relegated every season.

TELEVISION

● TV Globo are the major players in Brazil's broadcasting rights. They screen free-to-air, though some matches are shared with TV Bandeirantes on cable with their Sportv channel and also pay-per-view on Premier.

The current deal is for around £182million a

Rising star...Neymar celebrates with Santos fans after his side clinch the Sao Paulo state championship last year

year, but it runs out at the end of 2011 and the next deal is proving much more complex.

● Rights have been sold through the "Club of 13", an organisation which actually represents the 20 leading clubs. This time round, the Club of 13 put an end to Globo's first preference and then divided the deal into separate auctions for free-to-air, cable, pay-per-view, internet and mobile phone rights.

● Free-to-air is where Globo is most vulnerable, especially from the growing Record channel.

Critics of Globo point to the supremacy of soap operas in its schedule, meaning that televised evening games do not kick off until 9.50pm.

Supporters of Globo argue that the channel's massive audience make it the most attractive option for sponsors.

● After months of backstage politics, some 12 clubs are set to break away from the Club of 13 and negotiate their TV rights individually, undermining the concept of the auction. Club of 13 president Fabio Koff claims this is the work of an alliance between Globo and the CBF. In the event, neither Globo nor Record took part in the free-to-air auction, won by the relative newcomer Rede TV. This is a fairly hollow victory, though, as the contract is dependent on delivering all 20 clubs.

● There are plenty of negotiations ahead but two things seem certain: Globo is likely to remain a significant player and, once the process is complete, there is likely to be much more money on the table.

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35 million
estimated number of Flamego fans

14,839 people
average attendance at national championship games in 2010

2,634 miles
distance from Fortaleza to Porto Alegre

1 RIO DE JANEIRO

BOTAFOGO

Home...Joao Havelange Olympic Stadium

Rio's fourth force, they enjoyed a Garrincha-inspired golden era during the 1950s and 60s. Their 46,931-capacity Joao Havelange Olympic Stadium is currently Rio's major venue while the Maracana is closed for World Cup renovation work.

FLAMENGO

Shared...Joao Havelange Olympic Stadium

Brazil's most popular club, they began as a spin-off from Fluminense. Shrewdly acquired the popular touch in the 1930s, signing the three leading black players of the day and picking up a massive following all over the country. Currently sharing the Joao Havelange Olympic Stadium.

FLUMINENSE

Founded in 1902, the oldest major football club - those which predate it began life as rowing associations and took up football later. The traditional club of the Rio elite, they spent time in the third division just over a decade ago, but have hit back with the aid of a strong sponsor and are current national champions.

VASCO DA GAMA

Large...Sao Januario

The club of Portuguese immigrants, they revolutionised Brazilian football by winning the 1923 Rio title with a team including black and poor white players. Their Sao Januario stadium was the biggest in the continent when inaugurated in 1927.

2 SAO PAULO

CORINTHIANS

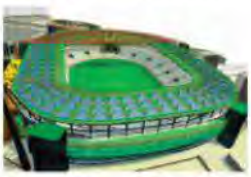
Founded in 1910 by a group of workers inspired by a visit from Corinthian Casuals, they grew as remarkably as the city

Current ground...Pacaembu Stadium

around them. The most popular side in the biggest city, they have a fanatical support base. Set to have their own stadium at last, with the projected venue hosting the opening game of the 2014 World Cup.

PALMEIRAS

The club of the city's giant Italian community were originally called Palestra Italia until a name change in 1942. A traditional reputation for stylish play


New arena...Palestra Italia Stadium

won them the nickname of "The Academy". Currently modernising their stadium.

SANTOS

Based in the port an hour's drive from Sao Paulo, Pele's old club are still the Brazilian team best known abroad and have an extraordinary track record bearing in mind their limited catchment area and

Work in progress... Rio de Janeiro's historic Maracana stadium is undergoing renovation

the World Cup are in for a rude surprise as Brazil has become very expensive.

With Brazilian clubs also calculated to receive more money in shirt sponsorship than anywhere else bar England and Germany, it begs the question of why the Brazilian championship is not already one of the strongest, glamorous and most widely watched in the world.

It may yet reach that status, but if it is to fulfil its massive potential, there are tough choices ahead and significant obstacles to overcome.

Brazilian football has reached its "1992 moment". This was the year when the English First Division broke away to form the Premier League, fleeing from a structure where the small clubs, through strength of numbers, held sway. In Brazil

Sea side...Urbano Caldeira Stadium

small stadium. A conveyor belt of young talent has brought the good times back in the last decade.

SAO PAULO

Founded in 1935 they are a comparative latecomer, but a consistently well-run club with an excellent structure. Associated with the city

Snubbed...Morumbi

elite, immense success over recent decades has widened the support base. Their Morumbi stadium was controversially excluded from the list of 2014 World Cup hosts grounds.

3 PORTO ALEGRE

GREMIO

Founded by the city's German community and historically linked with a tough, European style of play. Currently building a new stadium, their rivalry with Internacional is the fiercest in Brazil.

INTERNACIONAL

Founded, as the name implies, as a club open to all nationalities, they were the dominant team of the 1970s. Skilful administration

World Cup host...Beira Rio

and youth development have brought the good times back. Their Beira Rio stadium will be used during the World Cup.

4 BELO HORIZONTE

AMERICA

Have been pushed into third place regionally by the recent rise of Cruzeiro. Won promotion last season after a decade outside the first division. Their only top-10 finish was seventh in 1973.

ATLETICO MINEIRO

A traditional club, founded in 1908, who quickly acquired the popular touch and became the biggest club in the region. The first national champions in 1971, they are still waiting for a second title despite being consistent performers ever since.

CRUZEIRO

Founded in 1921 by the city's small Italian community, they emerged as a national force with the Tostao-inspired team of the 1960s and have long since outgrown their roots to become a massive club with an impressive structure.

5 CURITIBA

ATLETICO PARANAENSE

Ambitious, forward-thinking club who have established themselves in the first division over the past 15

Modern...Arena da Baixada

years and were champions in 2001. Their Arena da Baixada stadium will stage 2014 World Cup matches.

CORITIBA

A traditional club founded by German immigrants in 1909, they were surprise national champions in 1985 – the only time they have finished higher than fifth. Won promotion straight back to the first division last year after a season in the second tier.

6 FLORIANOPOLIS

AVAI

In the process of establishing themselves at national level, they spent four years in the first division in the bloated 1970s – never finishing higher than 36th – and finished sixth on their return in 2009.

FIGUEIRENSE

Back in the first division after a two-year absence, seventh in 2006 is their highest placing. Relegation in 2008 ended a best-ever run of seven consecutive years in the top flight.

7 GOIANIA

ATLETICO GOIANIENSE

The oldest Goiania club were founded in 1937 – six years before local rivals Goias, who were relegated last season. Spent four years in the first division in the 1970s and 80s. Back in the top flight last term, they saved themselves from relegation on the final day of the season.

8 SALVADOR

BAHIA

Back in the first division after seven years, which included a spell in the third tier. A big club with huge support who consistently punch beneath their weight. Champions in 1988, but that aside they have never finished higher than fifth.

9 FORTALEZA

CEARA

Second successive season in the top flight, their Castelao stadium witnessed the highest average attendance in last year's championship, but have yet to become a significant

Big crowds...Castelao

national force. Seventh in 1985, they have spent almost all their time since then in the second division.

the "dictatorship of the small clubs" is even more harmful. The country is divided into 27 states, each with their own football federation. In each state, he who controls the small clubs controls the federation. And those who control the federations control the Brazilian FA (CBF) – and, crucially, the calendar.

As a consequence, the state championships are still a fixture. Running from mid-January to early May, these pit a state's giant clubs in a league format against teams with next to no supporters and clubs that barely exist in a professional context. For many years, before the country had a national infrastructure, these competitions were of great use and importance, and it is only since 1971 that Brazil has boasted a genuinely national

Flamengo paying Ronaldinho (right) a fortune to play in the Rio state championship was like robber barons lighting cigars with $100 notes

championship. But nowadays the only thing the state championships represent for the big clubs is an opportunity to pick up a cheap title. In every other respect they are a waste of time.

This realisation has taken root. When Flamengo signed Ronaldinho, football columnist and former member of the sports ministry Jose Luis Portella wrote that paying him a fortune to play the Rio state championship was like the old robber barons lighting their cigars with $100 notes. "The state championships are a clear waste," he concluded.

But there is less awareness of the damage they do to the overall structure of the Brazilian game. In 2004 Brazil adopted the national league system, with the teams playing each other home and

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away. As any European fan is aware, the big virtue of this format is that it starts hot – the opening day is the big kick-off, a huge party with the excitement created by the pause beforehand.

But in Brazil there is no pause. The national championship gets going less than a week after the state tournaments have finished, so the big kick-off is a damp squib – and even damper if reserve teams are fielded, as is often the case, by those clubs involved in the decisive stages of the Libertadores or the domestic cup.

The state championships throw Brazil's calendar out of sync with the rest of the world and also make it impossible for Brazilian clubs to play high-profile international tournaments which could raise their global profile and bring in new revenue streams.

In the mood... fans warm up on Copacabana beach for a 2010 World Cup qualifier

There is a clear need for the big clubs to break away and form their own structure, just as happened in England in 1992. But the way that the clubs are organised makes this more difficult. Rather than businesses, Brazil's clubs are social organisations, where the president is elected by the members. This can make it harder for the clubs to take dispassionate, professional decisions. Politics continually takes place inside the clubs, with different currents jockeying for position. An old demagogic standby is to play to the gallery by attacking rival teams – a context which clearly complicates the possibility of a union of clubs.

These divisions have been well exploited by the power structure and the CBF has brought history to the battlefield. Winners of the prototype pre-1971 versions of the Brazilian title have now been recognised as national champions, a clear (and successful) attempt to sow discord among the clubs, a process amplified by the current dispute over TV rights. The power

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

THE POLITICIANS

Ricardo TEIXEIRA
Controversial federation president, in office since 1989 and now also presiding over the World Cup Local Organising Committee.

Joao HAVELANGE
Ex-Brazilian federation and FIFA president whose global commercial vision changed the game. Lucid and fearsome presence, now in his 90s.

Marcelo CAMPOS PINTO
Influential director of TV Globo's sports department. Opposes the league format and pushing for a return to the play-off system.

Fabio KOFF
Former Gremio president who is now the head of the Club of 13, representing the leading clubs in TV negotiations.

THE COACH

Mano MENEZES
National coach who made his name with Gremio and Corinthians. Calm and methodical, his patience will certainly be tested by the pressure of coaching the World Cup hosts in 2014.

THE POLITICIANS

Andres SANCHEZ
Corinthians president and head of Brazil's delegation at the last World Cup. His influence has apparently ensured that Corinthians will finally have their own stadium: the likely host venue for the opening World Cup match.

THE PLAYERS

PELE
Some political choices and financial controversies mean that his name is not quite as spotless as it appears abroad, but his importance at home is greater. A Brazilian hero whose significance transcends sport.

MARTA
Brazil's outstanding current player is a woman, repeatedly chosen as the world's best, and whose skill, biography and femininity have legitimised the women's game in all but the most macho minds.

THE MEDIA

Galvao BUENO
Charismatic TV Globo commentator with an ego to match. A skilled articulator of football's importance to Brazilian self-esteem. It is through his words that his countrymen experience the World Cup.

Juca KFOURI
Journalist of the left who, unlike most of his colleagues, did not shun football during the harshest years of Brazil's military dictatorship. Takes the moral high ground and a consistent thorn in the side of the power structure.

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structure is also strengthened by its control of the 2014 World Cup. Civil society is not represented on the Local Organising Committee, which is in the hands of long standing CBF president Ricardo Teixeira and where his daughter is a major player.

The World Cup is another area where Brazilian football has been undermined by its federal structure. Anxious not to alienate his regional power base by excluding the unsuccessful bids, Teixeira would not take responsibility for the choice of host cities. For the first time, the buck was passed to FIFA, slowing down the process and eating up valuable time.

The official announcement that Brazil would host the 2014 World Cup came in October 2007, but this merely rubber-stamped a position which had been clear since March 2003. So over six years had been wasted by the time the host cities were defined in May 2009 – and, with some political in-fighting along the way, not enough has been done to make up for that lost time.

Sao Paulo, South America's biggest city, is fancied to host the opening game. But Sao Paulo FC's Morumbi stadium has been cut from the project and work has yet to begin on its replacement – a projected new stadium for Corinthians. Building has also yet to start in Natal, the city most likely to be cut, and a recent specialist survey declared that its stadium runs the risk of turning into a white elephant, along with those in Brasilia, Cuiaba, Manaus and Recife.

Public money

The original plan that all stadium money would be private has long since died and the vast majority of the work will be funded by public money. The climate of urgency created means that the overburdened Brazilian taxpayer is likely to spend much more than envisaged, and receive less in return, as urban transport projects are cut or scaled back.

The big worry is the country's airport capacity. With the aim of reducing the number of flights and as a consequence of the size of the country, it is probable that the tournament will have to revert to the former practice whereby teams will be based in one region for their group games.

Not a bad idea, on the face of it, but even if, as is likely, all the work is carried out in time – and in classic Brazilian fashion everything is all right on the night – this leaves the 2014 World Cup with a problem caused not by man but by nature.

The tournament will take place in winter, which bites strong in the south and leaves the north untouched. There could well be a temperature difference of 30 degrees between host cities – which will surely cause complaints come the knockout stage when teams move from one region to another. W5

WEEKEND AWAYDAYS

SAO PAULO

WHEN May 2011 **WHY** It's the football capital of Brazil

PALMEIRAS v BOTAFOGO
May 22, 2011
SAO PAULO v INTERNACIONAL
May 22, 2011
CORINTHIANS v CORITIBA
May 28, 2011
SAO PAULO v FIGUEIRENSE
May 29, 2011

Feel the noise... Corinthians fans get in the mood at a local derby with Sao Paulo

An hour from the city centre, Pele's old team **Santos** leave their home of Vila Belmiro for the Pacaembu stadium in central Sao Paulo for Libertadores Cup games. Expect fast, attacking football from the likes of Neymar and Ganso, and noise from the *Torcida Jovem* fan group, who were formed in 1969 – the same year as Pele scored his 1,000th goal.

Tickets can be bought at the ground a day or so before the game. Here you will also find the Museum of Football (www.museudofutebol.org.br), which houses Pele's shirt from the 1970 World Cup Final. Bus 408A-10 runs there. For a taxi, call 5572 6611.

The 40,000-capacity Pacaembu is usually the home of **Corinthians** and should be packed for the visit of Coritiba in the first home national championship game – and one that should see the likely return to Brazilian soil of troubled star Adriano as a striking partner of Liedson.

With 25 million fans nationwide, Corinthians are Brazil's most popular team after Flamengo and each torcida has its own *bateria samba* drum corps found on the main arquibancada terrace, by the main entrance.

For neutrals, numbered seating (*numerada*) on the sideline is the best option. The few opposing fans have a small sector by the *numerada*. The rowdiest home fans, the *Gavioes da Fiel* (hawks of the faithful), gather on the terraces facing downtown. The *Camisa 12* (12th shirt) and *Pavilhao 9* (named after a wing at the destroyed Carandiru prison) groups make a noise alongside. Purchase tickets by registering via the website www.fieltorcedor.com.br or from the stadium. Another sales point is the club's base at their old home of Parque Sao Jorge

Terrace bars line Praca Buenos Aires in leafy Higienopolis nearby.

The city's answer to Rio's Maracana, the Morumbi is a similar concrete monster. It holds nearly 70,000 and is home to **Sao Paulo**, who are considered the city's playboy club. They play state championship games until late May, when the arrival of Figuerense signals the start of the national championship and the probable appearance of returning hero Luis Fabiano.

More likely to garner support from posher Paulistanos, Sao Paulo is still home to torcidas such as *Independente* and *Dragoes da Real* (royal dragons).

Tickets are sold at the stadium from 10am to 5pm daily, or from outlets listed at this part of the club's homepage (www.saopaulofc.net/ingressos/como-comprar). The Sao Paulo Bar is accessed through gate 2.

The Morumbi is in the district of the same name to the south-west, accessed by bus 765A-10, journey time 75 minutes from downtown. Check the route planner at www.sptrans.com.br, though a taxi might be easier.

Until the Arena Palestra Italia is opened in November 2012, **Palmeiras** are playing their home matches at the Pacaembu. Check the "*ingressos*" drop-down menu at www.palmeiras.com.br for all ticket details.

Around town, football-friendly bars include O'Malley's (Alameda Itu 1529, www.omalleysbar.net) at metro Consolacao and the Empanadas (Rua Wisard 489. www.empanadasbar.com.br), but real aficionados should head to the Sao Cristovao (Rua Aspicuelta 533) in Vila Madalena, a bar-cum-museum to the little club of the same name.

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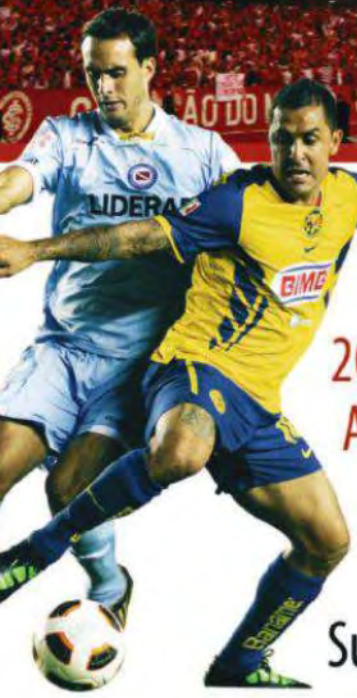

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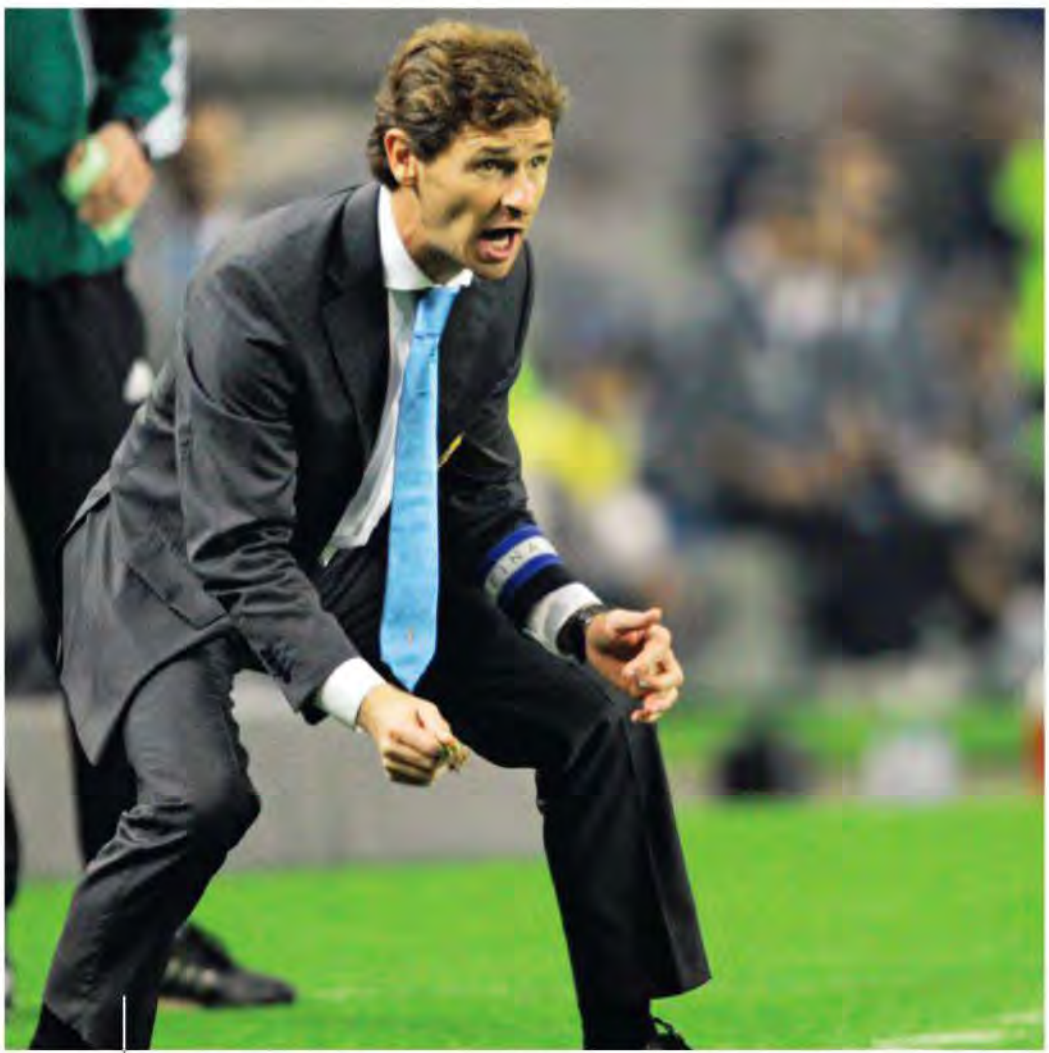

1 Andre Villas-Boas

PORTO

An association with greatness can be a double-edged sword, equally capable of opening doors as inflating expectations and hastening a sticky end. Yet as far as 33-year-old Andre Villas-Boas is concerned, his links with a certain Jose Mourinho have proved the ultimate in calling cards.

Knowing the esteem Mourinho had for Villas-Boas' work and his meticulous dossiers on opponents, Academica had no hesitation in recruiting him to coach their first team in the summer of 2009. And after leading the club from Coimbra to a respectable mid-table finish, he found himself headhunted by Porto, where he has not put a foot wrong, taking his side 16 points clear at the top of the table and still unbeaten in the league by the end of March.

Like Mourinho and the great Milan boss Arrigo Sacchi, Villas-Boas has no history as a player. However, he certainly possesses a feel for a game. He took his UEFA C coaching badge aged only 17, was still a teenager on taking up a post in Porto's scouting department and just 21 at the time of his spell in charge of the British Virgin Islands, who he led in the 2002 World Cup qualifiers.

2 Robin Dutt

FREIBURG

In less than two years, Robin Dutt, the Cologne-born son of an Indian father and a German mother has taken Freiburg back to the Bundesliga as second division champions and helped them set up shop in this season's top 10, despite working with one of the smallest budgets in the top flight. Such a rapid transformation of the Black Forest club's fortunes have not gone unnoticed and the 46-year-old has agreed to take over at Bayer Leverkusen in July.

Top of his class on graduating from Germany's national coaching academy in 2005, Dutt excels at analysis and strategy, balancing a commitment to enterprising attacking football with a generous sprinkling of pragmatism, and he has few peers in the art of communication – which has been an indispensable quality at Freiburg, where he has 12 different nationalities in his squad.

Having never coached above the third tier before his arrival at Freiburg from Stuttgarter Kickers in 2007, he was initially unpopular among a large proportion of the club's fans just for being the board's choice to replace previous boss Volker Finke after 16 years service. Few have criticised his appointment since.

3 Christophe Galtier

SAINT-ETIENNE

For someone who – when appointed Saint-Etienne boss in December 2009 – was only intended to be a two-game stopgap following the sacking of Alain Perrin, former Marseille and Toulouse full-back Christophe Galtier has turned out to be far more durable than anyone imagined. After transforming *Les Verts* into an outfit dripping with resilience, fire and cohesion, Galtier was promptly offered a long-term contract, and in his 15 months in charge has worked not one but two miracles: mounting a successful anti-relegation mission last season and then pushing for European qualification in the current campaign.

While Saint-Etienne is his first posting as a head coach, the 44-year-old is no wet-behind-the-ears rookie. For over a decade he has been a highly regarded number two, serving as the right-hand man to a number of Marseille bosses (Bernard Casoni, Abel Braga and Javier Clemente) and Perrin, with whom he worked at Al Ain in the UAE, Portsmouth, Sochaux and Lyon, as well as Saint-Etienne.

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4 Mauricio Pochettino

ESPANYOL

Handed the Espanyol job on the same day Barack Obama was inaugurated as president of the United States, former Argentina centre-back Mauricio Pochettino might not wield the power of a White House incumbent. However, the 39-year-old has proved himself perfectly suited to high office in football, fully deserving of all the praise that has come his way for steering his side away from the relegation rocks after taking over in 2009 and turning a predominantly youthful side into a top-six force in La Liga.

A natural-born winner with a strong personality and a pronounced sense of right and wrong – he once chased a pickpocket on Barcelona's main street, Las Ramblas – Pochettino's greatest asset is his ability to inspire, and his swagger and panache have clearly worked wonders on the psyche of Espanyol's Jose Callejon, Javi Chica and Raul Baena.

His trust in youth has paid dividends too, with only Athletic Bilbao, Real Sociedad and Barcelona having more youth-team products in their squad.

The club's blue-and-white stripes are his colours, having played over 300 games for *Los Periquitos* and getting his first taste of coaching there, in 2008, with the club's female squad.

5 Leonid Slutsky

CSKA MOSCOW

Two decades after falling from a tree while trying to rescue a neighbour's cat and injuring a knee so badly that he had to give up his dream of becoming a professional goalkeeper, 39-year-old Leonid Slutsky is now occupying the high branches of Russia's elite coaching community.

Forced by fate to seek another way of feeding his passion for the game, Slutsky turned to football education and took charge of a youth team in his home city of Volgograd aged just 22. Positions with Olimpia Volgograd in the third tier, second division Uralan Elista, top-flight FC Moscow and Krylia Sovetov followed before he replaced Juande Ramos at CSKA in October 2009.

Responsible in his first year at CSKA for steering the old army club to the quarter-finals of the Champions League and the runners-up spot in the 2010 domestic championship, the thoughtful, modest and well-read Slutsky stands for meticulous pre-match preparation, insistence on sound discipline and no little candour – three years ago he caused a stir by admitting in an internet blog that many of his Krylia squad had returned for pre-season seriously out of condition.

6 Pieter Huistra

GRONINGEN

In his first season as a head coach, former Holland and Rangers left-winger Pieter Huistra has made a fine fist of replacing Ron Jans in the Groningen dugout, with the team currently sitting in sixth place. Huistra has a solid grasp of all matters tactical, never loses perspective whatever the outcome of a match, has put in place a patient and controlled attacking blueprint and, above all, has won regularly enough for his side to be challenging for Europa League qualification.

Returning to the club for which he made his professional debut in 1984, and whose youth team he coached from 2001 until 2005, the 44-year-old cuts the figure of someone born to prowl the technical area and is regarded as one of the brightest team leaders in the Eredivisie today. His ability as a coach has long been recognised in his homeland, paving the way for employment with Holland Under-17s – where he worked with the likes of Rafael Van der Vaart, Robin Van Persie and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar – as well as Vitesse and the Ajax reserve side.

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On the up... Belgium's Marvin Ogunjimi outjumps Yasin Pehlivan (left) and Aleksandar Dragovic of Austria in their Euro 2012 qualifier

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At the double...Mouche

ARGENTINA

Stadium opener

A team picked solely from home-based players beat Venezuela 4-1 in a friendly to inaugurate the new Bicentenario Stadium in San Juan. The 25,000-capacity venue will host three matches in the Copa America during July. Boca Juniors striker Pablo Mouche scored twice on his international debut.

Ten days later, an Argentina side containing their overseas players drew 1-1 with the USA in front of 78,936 people in East Rutherford at the New Meadowlands Stadium – which was a record for a football game at the venue.

BULGARIA

Ton up for Petrov

Stiliyan Petrov won his 100th cap in the European 2012 qualifier goalless draw at home to Switzerland.

The 31-year-old Aston Villa midfielder became only the second Bulgarian player to achieve this feat, following goalkeeper and current FA president Boris Mihaylov, who made 102 international appearances.

35,000 capacity of Costa Rica's new Estadio Nacional, making it the largest ground in central America

RESULTS Internationals

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS

Group A

Mar 25 - Vienna
Austria 0
Belgium 2 (Witsel 6, 50)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 44,300. **Ref:** Bezborodov (Rus)
Austria: Macho - Dragovic, Pogatetz, Fuchs, Alaba (Pehlivan 54), Junuzovic (Korkmaz 69), Arnautovic, Dag, Baumgartlinger, Harnik, Janko (Maierhofer 54).
Belgium: Mignolet - Ciman, Van Buyten, Kompany, Vertonghen, Simons, Chadli, Defour, Ogunjimi (Mirallas 80), Witsel, Dembele.

Mar 26 - Kaiserslautern
Germany 4 (Klose 3, 88, Muller 25, 43)
Kazakhstan 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 47,849. **Ref:** Stavrev (Mac)
Germany: Neuer - Lahm, Mertesacker, Badstuber, Aogo, Khedira, Schweinsteiger (Kroos 77), Ozil, Podolski (Gomez 65), Muller (Gotze 78), Klose.
Kazakhstan: Loria - Chernyshov, Abdulin, Chichulin, Irismetov, Khiznichenko, Zhumaskaliyev (Bayzhanov 46), Konysbayev, Nurgaliyev (Kukeyev 60), Nurdauletov, Geteriyev (Ostapenko 81).

Mar 29 - Brussels
Belgium 4 (Vertonghen 12, Simons pen 32, Chadli 45+1, Vossen 74)
Azerbaijan 1 (Abushev 16)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 34,985. **Ref:** Stalhammar (Swe)
Belgium: Mignolet - Ciman, Van Buyten (Van Damme 80), Lombaerts, Vertonghen, Simons, Chadli, Defour (Odjidja 90), Vossen, Witsel, Dembele (Hazard 64).
Azerbaijan: Agayev - Melikov, Shukurov, Djavadov (Nadyrov 76), Chertoganov, E Mammadov (Huseynov 78), Aliyev, R F Sadygov, Abushev, Amirguliyev, Levin.

Mar 29 - Istanbul
Turkey 2 (Arda 28, Gokhan Gonul 78)
Austria 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Kralovec (Cze)
Turkey: Volkan Demirel - Servet, Hakan Balta, Serdar, Hamit Altintop, Gokhan Gonul, Selcuk Inan, Mehmet Ekici (Mehmet Topuz 63), Arda (Mehmet Topal 89), Burak (Semih 72), Nuri.
Austria: Macho - Dragovic, Pogatetz, Fuchs, Pehlivan (Korkmaz 57), Alaba, Dag, Baumgartlinger (Hoffer 46), Scharner, Harnik (Arnautovic 69), Maierhofer.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	5	5	0	0	17	1	15
Belgium	6	3	1	2	14	9	10
Turkey	5	3	0	2	8	6	9
Austria	5	2	1	2	9	8	7
Azerbaijan	4	1	0	3	3	13	3
Kazakhstan	5	0	0	5	0	14	0

Remaining games
03.06.11 Austria v Germany
03.06.11 Belgium v Turkey
03.06.11 Kazakhstan v Azerbaijan
07.06.11 Azerbaijan v Germany
02.09.11 Azerbaijan v Belgium
02.09.11 Germany v Austria
02.09.11 Turkey v Kazakhstan
06.09.11 Austria v Turkey
06.09.11 Azerbaijan v Kazakhstan
07.10.11 Azerbaijan v Austria
07.10.11 Belgium v Kazakhstan
07.10.11 Turkey v Germany
11.10.11 Germany v Belgium
11.10.11 Kazakhstan v Austria
11.10.11 Turkey v Azerbaijan

Group B

Mar 26 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 0
Slovakia 1 (Sebo 21)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 200. **Ref:** Masiah (Isr)
Andorra: Gomes - Rubio, Bernaus, E Garcia, I Lima, C Martinez, Gomez (Vieira 72), Ayala (J Sanchez 81), Vales, Moreno, Jimenez (Sonejee 87).
Slovakia: Mucha - Pekarik, Skrtel, Durica, Stoch (Salata 90), Jendrisek (Holosko 87), Luksik, Kona, Sebo, Hamsik, Vittek (Piroska 78).

Mar 26 - Yerevan
Armenia 0
Russia 0
Att: 15,000. **Ref:** Thomson (Sco)
Armenia: Berezovsky - Hayrapetyan (Artak Edigaryan 67), Hovsepyan, Arzumanyan, K Mkrtchyan, Pizzelli (Artur Edigaryan 57), Malakyan (Manucharyan 49), Ghazaryan, Movsisyan, Mkoyan, Henrikh Mkhitaryan.
Russia: Akinfeev - Shishkin, V Berezutsky, Ignashevich, Zhirkov, Shirokov, Denisov, Zyryanov, Dzagoev, Arshavin (Bilyaletdinov 90), Kerzhakov (Pogrebnyak 78).

Mar 26 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 2 (McGeady 2, Keane 21)
Macedonia 1 (Trickovski 45)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Vad (Hun)
Rep of Ireland: Westwood - Foley, O'Dea, Dunne, Kilbane, Whelan, McGeady, Gibson (Fahey 77), Duff, Doyle (Long 20), Keane (McCarthy 87).
Macedonia: Nuredinovski - Sikov, Popov, Noveski, Trickovski, Sumulikoski, Grncarov, Tasevski (Gjurovski 61), Demiri (Georgievski 84), Naumoski (Ristic 68), Pandev.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovakia	5	3	1	1	5	4	10
Russia	5	3	1	1	6	3	10
Rep of Ireland	5	3	1	1	9	6	10
Armenia	5	2	2	1	9	4	8
Macedonia	5	1	1	3	5	6	4
Andorra	5	0	0	5	1	12	0

Remaining games
04.06.11 Macedonia v Rep of Ireland
04.06.11 Russia v Armenia
04.06.11 Slovakia v Andorra
02.09.11 Andorra v Armenia
02.09.11 Rep of Ireland v Slovakia
02.09.11 Russia v Macedonia
06.09.11 Macedonia v Andorra
06.09.11 Russia v Rep of Ireland
06.09.11 Slovakia v Armenia
07.10.11 Andorra v Rep of Ireland
07.10.11 Armenia v Macedonia
07.10.11 Slovakia v Russia
11.10.11 Macedonia v Slovakia
11.10.11 Rep of Ireland v Armenia
11.10.11 Russia v Andorra

Group C

Mar 25 - Belgrade
Serbia 2 (Pantelic 65, Z Tosic 74)
Northern Ireland 1 (McAuley 40)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 265*. **Ref:** Gumienny (Blg)
**Home fans were banned*
Serbia: Brkic - Kolarov, Bisevac, Ivanovic, Z Tosic, Ljajic (Jovanovic 46), Krasic (Petrovic 86), Subotic, D Stankovic, Pantelic, Milijas (Ninkovic 46).
Northern Ireland: Camp - Cathcart, J Evans (McCourt 86), A Hughes, McAuley, Baird, Brunt, C Evans, Clingan, Gorman (Feeney 78), Lafferty (Healy 46).

Mar 25 - Ljubljana
Slovenia 0
Italy 1 (Thiago Motta 73)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 16,000. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko (Andjelkovic 70), Cesar, Suler, Jokic, Dedic (Ljubijankic 56), Kirm, Radosavljevic, Koren, Novakovic, Birsa (Ilicic 74).
Italy: Buffon - Maggio, Chiellini, Thiago Motta, Mauri (Nocerino 63), Pazzini, Bonucci, Balzaretti, Aquilani, Cassano (Rossi 74), Montolivo (Marchisio 87).

Mar 29 - Tallinn
Estonia 1 (Vassiljev 84)
Serbia 1 (Pantelic 38)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,185. **Ref:** Nijhuis (Hol)
Estonia: Pareiko - Rahn, Piiroja, Kruglov, Dmitrijev, S Puri (Purje 29), Vassiljev, Klavan, Enar Jaager, Ahjupera (Oper 55), Saag (Kink 66).
Serbia: Brkic - Kolarov, Bisevac, Vidic, Ivanovic, Z Tosic, Jovanovic (Zigic 74), Petrovic, Ninkovic (Trivunovic 14), Pantelic, Milijas.

Mar 29 - Belfast
Northern Ireland 0
Slovenia 0
Att: 11,299. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Northern Ireland: Camp - Cathcart, J Evans, McAuley, Craigan, Baird, Clingan, McCann (McQuoid 72), Feeney (McCourt 82), Brunt, C Evans (Boyce 90+1).
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Suler, Jokic, Mavric, Bacinovic (Sukalo 90), Ilicic (Ljubijankic 29), Kirm, Novakovic (Dedic 84), Koren, Birsa.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS - GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	5	4	1	0	11	1	13
Slovenia	6	2	2	2	7	4	8
Serbia	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
Estonia	5	2	1	2	7	6	7
N Ireland	5	1	3	1	3	3	6
Faroe Islands	5	0	1	4	3	16	1

Remaining games
03.06.11 Faroe Islands v Slovenia
03.06.11 Italy v Estonia
07.06.11 Faroe Islands v Estonia
10.08.11 N Ireland v Faroe Islands
02.09.11 Faroe Islands v Italy
02.09.11 N Ireland v Serbia
02.09.11 Slovenia v Estonia
06.09.11 Estonia v N Ireland
06.09.11 Italy v Slovenia
06.09.11 Serbia v Faroe Islands
07.10.11 N Ireland v Estonia
07.10.11 Serbia v Italy
11.10.11 Italy v N Ireland
11.10.11 Slovenia v Serbia

Group D

Mar 25 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 0
France 2 (Mexes 28, Gourcuff 72)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Hagen (Nor)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Blaise, Hoffmann, Schnell, C Leweck (Plein 90), Bettmer, Joachim, Laterza (Martino 54), Mutsch, Gerson (Da Mota 71), Payal.
France: Lloris - Sagna, Rami, Mexes, Evra, M'Vila, Gourcuff, Nasri, Malouda, Ribery, Benzema.

Mar 26 - Tirana
Albania 1 (Salihi 62)
Belarus 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,500. **Ref:** Strombergsson (Swe)
Albania: Ujkani - Lila, Cana, Vangjeli, Agolli, Bulku, Skela (Duro 81), Lala, Teli, Bogdani (Bakaj 75), Salihi (Muzaka 90+3).
Belarus: Veremko - Kulchy (Bychenok 62), Shitov, Molosh, Tigorev, Martynovich, Omelyanchuk, Putsilo (Sitko 82), Kislyak, V Hleb, Krivets (Kovel 46).

Mar 26 - Zenica
Bosnia-Herzegovina 2 (Ibisevic 63, Dzeko 83)
Romania 1 (Marica 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Teixeira Vitienes (Spa)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Hasagic - Spahic, Mravac, Rahimic, Mujdza, Lulic, Medunjanin (Maletic 70), Pjanic, Misimovic (Ibricic 81), Ibisevic (Muslimovic 76), Dzeko.
Romania: Pantilimon - Alexa, Tamas, Rat, Rapa, Torje (Cocis 70), Goian, Deac (Zicu 85), Florescu (Ropotan 76), Mutu, Marica.

Mar 29 - Piatra Neamt
Romania 3 (Mutu 24, 68, Zicu 78)
Luxembourg 1 (Gerson 22)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Gocek (Tur)
Romania: Tatarusanu - Sapunaru, Tamas (Goian 65), Rat, Zicu, Ropotan, Stancu (Torje 46), Muresan, Gardos, Mutu (Alexe 84), Marica.
Luxembourg: Joubert - Blaise, Hoffmann, Schnell (Martino 90), Peters, Joachim, C Leweck, Bettmer (Laterza 81), Mutsch, Gerson (Da Mota 58), Payal.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	5	4	0	1	8	1	12
Belarus	5	2	2	1	3	1	8
Albania	5	2	2	1	4	4	8
Bosnia-Herz	4	2	1	1	6	4	7
Romania	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Luxembourg	6	0	1	5	1	11	1

Remaining games
03.06.11 Belarus v France
03.06.11 Romania v Bosnia-Herz
07.06.11 Belarus v Luxembourg
07.06.11 Bosnia-Herz v Albania
02.09.11 Albania v France
02.09.11 Belarus v Bosnia-Herz
02.09.11 Luxembourg v Romania
06.09.11 Bosnia-Herz v Belarus
06.09.11 Luxembourg v Albania
06.09.11 Romania v France
07.10.11 Bosnia-Herz v Luxembourg
07.10.11 France v Albania
07.10.11 Romania v Belarus
11.10.11 Albania v Romania
11.10.11 France v Bosnia-Herz

Hundred club...Petrov

ENGLAND

Welbeck rejects Ghana

Having rejected overtures from his parents' homeland of Ghana, Manchester-born striker Danny Welbeck made his international debut as a second-half substitute for England against the west African side in a 1-1 draw at Wembley.

Matthew Jarvis also made his first appearance for the home nation, becoming the first Wolverhampton Wanderers player to win a full England cap since Steve Bull 20 years ago.

FRANCE

Another leader

Samir Nasri became the fifth player to captain *Les Bleus* since Laurent Blanc took charge. The Arsenal midfielder, who led France against Luxembourg, followed in the footsteps of Alou Diarra, Hugo Lloris, Florent Malouda and Philippe Mexes.

Former skipper Patrice Evra, and Franck Ribery played for the national team for the first time since being banned for five and three games respectively for their part in the disharmony which plagued France's World Cup last summer.

Skip...Nasri takes the armband

Group E

Mar 25 - Budapest
Hungary 0
Holland 4 (Van der Vaart 8, Afellay 45, Kuyt 54, Van Persie 62)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 23,817. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Hungary: Kiraly - Liptak, Juhasz, Elek (Priskin 79), Laczko, Vanczak, Dzsudzsak, Koman (Czvitkovics 46), Gera, Varga (Vadocz 46), Rudolf.
Holland: Vorm - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Pieters, N De Jong, Afellay (Elia 63), Sneijder, Van der Vaart (Strootman 82), Kuyt (Van Nistelrooy 82), Van Persie.

Mar 29 - Amsterdam
Holland 5 (Van Persie 13, Sneijder 61, Van Nistelrooy 73, Kuyt 78, 81)
Hungary 3 (Rudolf 46, Gera 50, 75)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 51,775. **Ref:** Moen (Nor)
Holland: Vorm - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Pieters (Emanuelson 64), N De Jong, Afellay, Sneijder, Van der Vaart, Kuyt (Elia 90), Van Persie (Van Nistelrooy 46).
Hungary: Fulop - Lazar, Vanczak, Juhasz, Laczko, Vadocz (Czvitkovics 90), Dzsudzsak, Pinter (Koman 46), Gera, Priskin (Tokoli 73), Rudolf.

Mar 29 - Stockholm
Sweden 2 (Lustig 30, S Larsson 82)
Moldova 1 (Suvorov 90+2)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,544. **Ref:** Kircher (Ger)
Sweden: Isaksson - Lustig, Wendt, Wernbloom (R Elm 65), Granqvist, Antonsson, Bajrami (M Olsson 73), S Larsson, Kallstrom, Ibrahimovic, Elmander (Gerndt 89).
Moldova: Stanislav Namasco - Armas, Golovatenco, Boret, Racu, Bolohan, Doros (Cheptine 72), Suvorov, Gatcan (Andronic 83), Cebotaru, Frunza (Bugaiov 46).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Holland	6	6	0	0	21	5	18
Sweden	4	3	0	1	11	5	9
Hungary	6	3	0	3	15	13	9
Moldova	5	2	0	3	6	5	6
Finland	4	1	0	3	10	6	3
San Marino	5	0	0	5	0	29	0

Remaining games

03.06.11	Moldova v Sweden
03.06.11	San Marino v Finland
07.06.11	San Marino v Hungary
07.06.11	Sweden v Finland
02.09.11	Finland v Moldova
02.09.11	Holland v San Marino
02.09.11	Hungary v Sweden
06.09.11	Finland v Holland
06.09.11	Moldova v Hungary
06.09.11	San Marino v Sweden
07.10.11	Finland v Sweden
07.10.11	Holland v Moldova
11.10.11	Hungary v Finland
11.10.11	Moldova v San Marino
11.10.11	Sweden v Holland

Group F

Mar 26 - Tbilisi
Georgia 1 (Kobiashvili 90)
Croatia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 55,000. **Ref:** Tagliavento (Ita)
Georgia: Revishvili - Salukvadze, Khubutia, Kaladze, Amisulashvili, Khizanishvili, Kankava, Daushvili (Gogua 73), Dvalishvili (Siradze 46), A Iashvili (Martsvaladze 62), Kobiashvili.
Croatia: Runje - Corluka, Strinic, Lovren, Petric (Pranjic 84), Srna, Dujmovic, Rakitic (Perisic 61), Modric, Kranjcar (Jelavic 70), Kalinic.

Mar 26 - Tel Aviv
Israel 2 (Barda 16, Kayal 81)
Latvia 1 (Gorkss 62)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Israel: Aouate - Tal Ben Haim [DF], Gershon, Natcho, Kayal, Twatha, Ziv (Sahar 66), I Cohen, Damari, Rafaelov (Vermouth 84), Barda (Buzaglo 69).
Latvia: Vanins - Kacanovs, Krjauklis, Ivanovs, Gorkss, Rafalskis (Zigajevs 58), Rudnevs, Lazdins, Lukjanovs, Rubins (Pereplotkins 57), Verpakovskis (Turkovs 73).

Mar 26 - Valletta
Malta 0
Greece 1 (Torosidis 90+2)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,000. **Ref:** Weiner (Ger)
Malta: Haber - Caruana (Pace 46), A Agius, Sciberras, Mamo, Hutchinson, Schembri (Cohen 90+1), S Bajada (R Fenech 78), Briffa, Bogdanovic, M Mifsud.
Greece: Tzorvas - Tzavellas, Papastathopoulos, Salpigidis (Fetfatzidis 61), Torosidis, A Papadopoulos, Katsouranis, Karagounis, Ninis (Kone 81), Limberopoulos (Mitroglou 70), Samaras.
Sent off: Papastathopoulos 84min.

Mar 29 - Tel Aviv
Israel 1 (Tal Ben Haim [FW] 59)
Georgia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,716. **Ref:** Fautrel (Fra)
Israel: Aouate - Bondarv, Tal Ben Haim [DF], Gershon, Natcho (Tal Ben Haim [FW] 52), Kayal, Keinan, Buzaglo, A Cohen, Rafaelov (Vermouth 63), Barda (Benayoun 71).
Georgia: Revishvili - Salukvadze, Amisulashvili, Khizanishvili, Khubutia, Kaladze, Kankava, Martsvaladze (Siradze 73), Daushvili (Kvirkvelia 46), A Iashvili (Dvalishvili 63), Kobiashvili.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	5	3	2	0	5	2	11
Croatia	5	3	1	1	8	2	10
Israel	6	3	1	2	8	6	10
Georgia	6	2	3	1	4	3	9
Latvia	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
Malta	5	0	0	5	1	10	0

Remaining games

04.06.11	Croatia v Georgia
04.06.11	Greece v Malta
04.06.11	Latvia v Israel
02.09.11	Georgia v Latvia
02.09.11	Israel v Greece
02.09.11	Malta v Croatia
06.09.11	Croatia v Israel
06.09.11	Latvia v Greece
06.09.11	Malta v Georgia
07.10.11	Greece v Croatia
07.10.11	Latvia v Malta
11.10.11	Croatia v Latvia
11.10.11	Georgia v Greece
11.10.11	Malta v Israel

Group G

Mar 26 - Sofia
Bulgaria 0
Switzerland 0
Att: 8,500. **Ref:** Collum (Sco)
Bulgaria: Mihaylov - Manolev, Bandalovski, Zanev, K Stoyanov, Georgiev, I Ivanov, S Petrov, Delev (Lazarov 81), Makriev (Genkov 52), Popov (Angelov 85).
Switzerland: Wolfli - Lichtsteiner, Von Bergen, Ziegler, Grichting, Inler, Dzemaili, Behrami (Fernandes 17), Stocker (Derdiyok 67), Frei, Streller (Gavranovic 77).

Mar 26 - Cardiff
Wales 0
England 2 (Lampard pen 7, Bent 15)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 68,959. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Wales: Hennessey - Gunter, J Collins, Williams, D Collins, Crofts, Ramsey, King (Vaughan 65), Ledley, Bellamy, Morison (C Evans 65).
England: Hart - G Johnson, Dawson, Terry, A Cole, Parker (Jagielka 89), Lampard, Wilshere (Downing 82), Young, Rooney (Milner 70), Bent.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	4	3	1	0	9	1	10
Montenegro	4	3	1	0	3	0	10
Switzerland	4	1	1	2	5	5	4
Bulgaria	4	1	1	2	1	5	4
Wales	4	0	0	4	1	8	0

Remaining games

04.06.11	England v Switzerland
04.06.11	Montenegro v Bulgaria
02.09.11	Bulgaria v England
02.09.11	Wales v Montenegro
06.09.11	England v Wales
06.09.11	Switzerland v Bulgaria
07.10.11	Montenegro v England
07.10.11	Wales v Switzerland
11.10.11	Bulgaria v Wales
11.10.11	Switzerland v Montenegro

Group H

Mar 26 - Nicosia
Cyprus 0
Iceland 0
Att: 2,000. **Ref:** Ceferin (Sln)
Cyprus: Georgallides - Sielis (Demetriou 46), Merkis, Aloneftis, Charalambides, Makrides, Michael, Poursaitidis (Elia 73), Avraam, Dobrasinovic, Christofi (Alexandrou 73).
Iceland: Magnusson - B Saevarsson, K Sigurdsson, I Sigurdsson, G Sigurdsson (B Bjarnason 90+1), E Jonsson, A Gunnarsson, Hreidarsson, R Gislason (Finnbogason 63), J Gudmundsson (Smarason 59), Helguson.

Mar 26 - Oslo
Norway 1 (Huseklepp 81)
Denmark 1 (Rommedahl 27)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 24,828. **Ref:** Rocchi (Ita)
Norway: Jarstein - Waehler, Hangeland, J A Riise, B H Riise, Hauger, Abdellaoue, Ruud (Braaten 78), Grindheim, Gamst Pedersen, Huseklepp (Iversen 89).
Denmark: T Sorensen - Jacobsen, Agger, Silberbauer, C Poulsen (J Poulsen 70), Mathias Jorgensen, Kvist, Eriksen, Krohn-Dehli (Enevoldsen 82), Rommedahl (Wass 90+3), Bendtner.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	4	3	1	0	6	3	10
Portugal	4	2	1	1	10	7	7
Denmark	4	2	1	1	5	4	7
Cyprus	4	0	2	2	5	8	2
Iceland	4	0	1	3	2	6	1

Remaining games

04.06.11	Iceland v Denmark
04.06.11	Portugal v Norway
02.09.11	Cyprus v Portugal
02.09.11	Norway v Iceland
06.09.11	Denmark v Norway
06.09.11	Iceland v Cyprus
07.10.11	Cyprus v Denmark
07.10.11	Portugal v Iceland
11.10.11	Denmark v Portugal
11.10.11	Norway v Cyprus

Group I

Mar 25 - Granada
Spain 2 (Villa 69, pen 72)
Czech Republic 1 (Plasil 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 16,200. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
Spain: Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Arbeloa, Capdevila (Cazorla 58), Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Fernando Torres 46), Xavi, Iniesta, Jesus Navas (Marchena 86), Villa.
Czech Republic: Cech - M Kadlec, Hubnik, Sivok, Rezek (Necid 84), Hubschman, Pospech, Pudil (Hlousek 78), Rosicky, Plasil, Baros.

Mar 29 - Ceske Budejovice
Czech Republic 2 (Baros 3, M Kadlec 70)
Liechtenstein 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,681. **Ref:** Hategan (Rom)
Czech Republic: Cech - M Kadlec, Hubnik, Sivok, Hubschman, Pospech, Moravek (Hlousek 56), Lafata (Necid 59), Rosicky (Polak 84), Plasil, Baros.
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Erne, Michael Stocklasa, Martin Stocklasa, Rechsteiner, M Buchel (Kieber 10; Christen 81), N Hasler, D Hasler, Burgmeier, T Beck, M Frick.

Mar 29 - Kaunas
Lithuania 1 (Stankevicius 57)
Spain 3 (Xavi 19, Kijanskas og 70, Mata 83)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Duhamel (Fra)
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Semberas, Kijanskas, Skerla, Zaliukas, Panka, E Cesnauskis, Mikoliunas (Radavicius 71), Stankevicius, Sernas (Labukas 74), Danilevicius (Galkevicius 85).
Spain: Casillas - Albiol, Pique (Sergio Ramos 90), Iraola, Cazorla (Mata 67), Arbeloa, Martinez, Xabi Alonso, Xavi, Llorente, Villa (Silva 54).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	5	5	0	0	15	5	15
Czech Rep	5	3	0	2	6	3	9
Scotland	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Lithuania	4	1	1	2	3	6	4
Liechtenstein	4	0	0	4	1	10	0

Remaining games

03.06.11	Liechtenstein v Lithuania
02.09.11	Lithuania v Liechtenstein
03.09.11	Scotland v Czech Republic
06.09.11	Scotland v Lithuania
06.09.11	Spain v Liechtenstein
07.10.11	Czech Republic v Spain
08.10.11	Liechtenstein v Scotland
11.10.11	Lithuania v Czech Republic
11.10.11	Spain v Scotland

The 9 group winners and the runner-up with the best record (against the teams finishing 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the respective groups) qualify automatically for the finals. The 8 remaining runners-up will be drawn in 4 head-to-head, 2-leg play-offs, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals. Co-hosts Poland and Ukraine qualify automatically

Play-off dates:
1st legs - November 11/12, 2011;
2nd legs - November 15, 2011

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Seven more...Klose

GERMANY

Klose nears record

Miroslav Klose's two goals against Kazakhstan took him to within seven goals of the Germany record of 68 held by Gerd Muller.

"Now that I am so close, naturally I want to move past him," said the 32-year-old after winning his 107th cap in the Euro 2012 qualifier. "I have already spoken to Gerd about it and he told me he wouldn't be angry with me if I take away his record.

"He even told me he would be happy for me. In any case he will always be *Der Bomber* and no one can take that away from him."

Klose, who failed to score in the next game, a 1-0 defeat by Australia, is now Germany's second-most capped player, alongside Jurgen Klinsmann, with 108.

The 2010 World Cup semi-finalists have announced a friendly against the tournament runners-up Holland in Hamburg on November 15 - as long as both teams qualify directly for the European Championship and therefore avoid the play-offs, which will also take place in November.

Germany will also host France in a friendly on February 29, 2012, with a return match on March 5, 2014 in France.

ISRAEL

Coach back in charge

Luis Fernandez resumed his duties as national coach and oversaw Euro 2012 qualifying victories over Latvia and Georgia after a FIFA ban was lifted. The

INTERNATIONALS

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS

Group A

Mar 26 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 4 (Heldon pen 12, 45, Babanco 22, Odair Fortes 53)
Liberia 2 (Wleh 38, Keita 84)
HT: 3-1

Mar 26 - Bamako
Mali 1 (Diabate 22)
Zimbabwe 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cape Verde	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Mali	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Zimbabwe	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Liberia	3	0	1	2	4	7	1

Remaining games
04.06.11 Liberia v Cape Verde
04.06.11 Zimbabwe v Mali
03.09.11 Mali v Cape Verde
03.09.11 Zimbabwe v Liberia
08.10.11 Cape Verde v Zimbabwe
08.10.11 Liberia v Mali

Group B

Mar 26 - Antananarivo
Madagascar 1 (Rajaonarimana 17)
Guinea 1 (M Bah 85)
HT: 1-0
Sent off: K Cisse (Guinea)

Mar 27 - Abuja
Nigeria 4 (P Utaka 1, 53, I Uche 77, 90)
Ethiopia 0
HT: 1-0
Nigeria: Aiyenugba - Okonkwo, Taiwo, Yobo, Ambrose, Obi, Mikel, Nsofor, Musa, P Utaka (I Uche), Anichebe (Odemwingie).

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Nigeria	3	2	0	1	6	1	6
Ethiopia	3	1	0	2	2	8	3
Madagascar	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Remaining games
04.06.11 Ethiopia v Nigeria
04.06.11 Guinea v Madagascar
03.09.11 Guinea v Ethiopia
03.09.11 Madagascar v Nigeria
08.10.11 Ethiopia v Madagascar
08.10.11 Nigeria v Guinea

Group C

Mar 27 - Maputo
Mozambique 0
Zambia 2 (Chamanga 15, Mayuka 90)
HT: 0-1

Mar 28 - Bamako, Mali
Libya 3 (El Khatroushi 20, Wafa 68, J A Mohamed)
Comoros 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libya	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
Zambia	3	2	0	1	6	1	6
Mozambique	3	1	1	1	1	2	4
Comoros	3	0	0	3	0	8	0

Remaining games
04.06.11 Comoros v Libya
04.06.11 Zambia v Mozambique
03.09.11 Comoros v Zambia
03.09.11 Libya v Mozambique
08.10.11 Mozambique v Comoros
08.10.11 Zambia v Libya

Group D

Mar 26 - Dar es Salaam
Tanzania 2 (Nditi 49, Samata 90+1)
Central African Republic 1 (Keita 2)
HT: 0-1

Mar 27 - Annaba
Algeria 1 (Yebda pen 7)
Morocco 0
HT: 1-0
Algeria: M'Bolhi - Mostefa, Yahia (Medjani 70), Bouzid, Mesbah, Lemmouchia, Lacen, Yebda (Hadj Aissa 89), Boudebouz (Belhadj 81), Ghezzal, Djebbour.
Morocco: Lamyaghri - Chretien, Benatia, Kantari, Souleimani, Hermach, Belhanda (Assaidi 89), Kharja, Boussoufa, Taarabt (El Arabi 70), Chamakh.

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cent Af Rep	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
Tanzania	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Morocco	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Algeria	3	1	1	1	2	3	4

Remaining games
04.06.11 Cent Af Rep v Tanzania
04.06.11 Morocco v Algeria
03.09.11 Cent Af Rep v Morocco
03.09.11 Tanzania v Algeria
08.10.11 Algeria v Cent Af Rep
08.10.11 Morocco v Tanzania

Group E

Mar 26 - Dakar
Senegal 1 (D Ba 90+2)
Cameroon 0
HT: 0-0
Senegal: K Ndiaye - Diakhate, Mangane, Sane, Daf, Diame, Ndaw, Sow, M B Diouf (Ndoye 56), P D Cisse (D Ba 70), Niang (Dia 82).
Cameroon: Kameni - Assou-Ekotto, Mbia, Nkoulou, Angbwa, Chedjou, Enoh, Nguemo (Mandjeck 87), Bedimo (Choupo-Moting 61), Eto'o, Webo (Aboubakar 75).

Mar 27 - Kinshasa
DR Congo 3 (LuaLua pen 24, Matumona 48, Y-D Ilunga pen 68)
Mauritius 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal	3	3	0	0	12	2	9
DR Congo	3	1	1	1	6	5	4
Cameroon	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Mauritius	3	0	0	3	1	13	0

Remaining games
04.06.11 Cameroon v Senegal
04.06.11 Mauritius v DR Congo
03.09.11 Cameroon v Mauritius
03.09.11 Senegal v DR Congo
08.10.11 DR Congo v Cameroon
08.10.11 Mauritius v Senegal

Group F

Mar 26 - Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso 4 (Alain Traore 25, 45+1, 80, R Gariseb og 73)
Namibia 0
HT: 2-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Gambia	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Namibia	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

Mauritania withdrew before 1st round of games

Remaining games
04.06.11 Namibia v Burkina Faso
03.09.11 Namibia v Gambia
08.10.11 Gambia v Burkina Faso

Group G

Mar 26 - Johannesburg
South Africa 1 (Mphela 90+3)
Egypt 0
HT: 0-0
South Africa: Khune - Ngcongca, Gaxa (Cloete 81), Khumalo, Gould, Dikgacoi, Pienaar (Letsholonyane 81), Khuboni, Tshabalala, Parker (Segolela 61), Mphela.
Egypt: El Hadary - Al Muhammady, Gomaa, Ghali, Fathalla, Moawad, Fathi, Abd Rabou (Geddo 60), Shawki, Shikabala (Zidan 86), Hamdi (Aboutraika 76).

Mar 27 - Niamey
Niger 3 (Dante 64, Sidibe 79, Daouda 89)
Sierra Leone 1 (Bangura 11)
HT: 0-1

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	3	2	1	0	3	0	7
Niger	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Sierra Leone	3	0	2	1	2	4	2
Egypt	3	0	1	2	1	3	1

Remaining games
04.06.11 Egypt v South Africa
04.06.11 Sierra Leone v Niger
03.09.11 Niger v South Africa
03.09.11 Sierra Leone v Egypt
08.10.11 Egypt v Niger
08.10.11 South Africa v Sierra Leone

Group H

Mar 26 - Kigali
Rwanda 3 (Iranzi 34, Uzamukunda pen 45, Gasana 88)
Burundi 1 (Faty 36)
HT: 2-1

Mar 27 - Accra, Ghana
Ivory Coast 2 (Drogba 45, 76)
Benin 1 (S Tchomogo 23)
HT: 1-1
Ivory Coast: Yeboah - Tiene, Gohouri, Zokora, Demel, Romaric (Keita), Tiote, Eboue (Coulibaly), Kalou, Drogba, Gervinho. *Sent off: Demel.*

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Benin	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
Rwanda	3	1	0	2	3	7	3
Burundi	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

Remaining games
04.06.11 Benin v Ivory Coast
04.06.11 Burundi v Rwanda
03.09.11 Burundi v Benin
03.09.11 Rwanda v Ivory Coast
08.10.11 Benin v Rwanda
08.10.11 Ivory Coast v Burundi

Group I

Mar 27 - Brazzaville
Congo 0
Ghana 3 (Tagoe 20, Adiyiah 45, Muntari 78)
HT: 0-2
Ghana: Kingson - Paintsil, D Addy (L Addy), Vorsah, John Mensah, Annan, A Ayew (Muntari), Agyemang-Badu, Tagoe (Inkoom), Adiyiah, K Asamoah.

Mar 27 - Omdurman
Sudan 3 (Bisha 2, 63, El Tahir 90)
Swaziland 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana	3	2	1	0	6	0	7
Sudan	3	2	1	0	5	0	7
Congo	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Swaziland	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

Remaining games
04.06.11 Ghana v Congo
04.06.11 Swaziland v Sudan
03.09.11 Congo v Sudan
03.09.11 Ghana v Swaziland
08.10.11 Sudan v Ghana
08.10.11 Swaziland v Congo

Group J

Mar 26 - Bissau
Guinea-Bissau 0
Uganda 1 (Obua 21)
HT: 0-1

Mar 26 - Nairobi
Kenya 2 (Mohammed 50, Mariga 88)
Angola 1 (Manucho 20)
HT: 0-1
Sent off: Mariga (Kenya) 89min

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP J

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uganda	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
Kenya	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Guinea-Bissau	3	1	0	2	1	2	3
Angola	3	1	0	2	2	5	3

Remaining games
04.06.11 Angola v Kenya
04.06.11 Uganda v Guinea-Bissau
03.09.11 Angola v Uganda
03.09.11 Kenya v Guinea-Bissau
08.10.11 Guinea-Bissau v Angola
08.10.11 Uganda v Kenya

Off...Mariga removes his shirt

Frenchman was suspended from all football due to a debt allegedly owed to Qatari club Al Rayyan.

KENYA

Inter man sees red

MacDonald Mariga was sent off after removing his shirt while celebrating his late winner against Angola in Kenya's 2-1 African Nations Cup qualifying victory.

"I am very disappointed to be sent off," said the Internazionale midfielder. "As a professional player I should have known the result of my action."

MEXICO

El Tri hit three

Manchester United's Javier Hernandez scored twice as new coach Jose Manuel de la Torre's side beat Paraguay 3-1. Andres Guardado was *El Tri*'s other scorer, while Toluca goalkeeper Alfredo Talavera made his debut at international level.

NIGERIA

South American visitors

Argentina will play an international friendly against Samson Siasia's side in Abuja on June 1.

8 players who have now won 100 caps or more for Mexico, following Rafael Marquez's appearance in the 3-1 victory over Paraguay

Group K

Mar 26 - N'Djamena
Chad 0
Botswana 1 (Ramatlhakwane 52)
HT: 0-0

Mar 26 - Blantyre
Malawi 1 (Chavula 19)
Togo 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP K

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Botswana (Q)	6	5	1	0	7	2	16
Malawi	5	2	3	0	11	6	9
Tunisia	5	2	1	2	7	6	7
Togo	6	0	3	3	5	8	3
Chad	6	0	2	4	5	13	2

Remaining games

04.06.11	Botswana v Malawi
04.06.11	Tunisia v Chad
03.09.11	Malawi v Tunisia
03.09.11	Togo v Botswana
08.10.11	Chad v Malawi
08.10.11	Tunisia v Togo

The 11 group winners, the runner-up in Group K (the only 5-team group) and the 2 other runners-up with the best record (against the teams finishing 1st and 3rd in the respective groups) qualify for the finals. Co-hosts Equatorial Guinea and Gabon qualify automatically.
Q = qualified

2012 AFC CHALLENGE CUP

Preliminary round

1st legs

Mar 23 - Gurgaon, India
Bhutan 0
Afghanistan 3 (Walizada 2, 36, 80)
HT: 0-2

2nd legs

Mar 15 - Ulaan Baatar
Mongolia 2 (Lumbengarav 21, Garidmagnai 34)
Philippines 1 (J Younghusband 3)
HT: 2-1
Philippines 3-2 on agg

Mar 25 - Gurgaon, India
Afghanistan 2 (Wahid 61, Kohistani 65)
Bhutan 0
HT: 0-0
Afghanistan 5-0 on agg

Winners entered the qualifying group stage

Qualifying group stage

Group A

In Yangon, Myanmar

Mar 21
Myanmar 1 (Khin Maung-Iwin 90+3)
Philippines 1 (J Younghusband pen 76)
HT: 0-0
Sent off: Kyaw Zin-htet (Myanmar) 73min

Mar 21
Palestine 2 (Alyan 46, 65)
Bangladesh 0
HT: 0-0

Mar 23
Philippines 0
Palestine 0

Mar 23
Bangladesh 2 (Ahmed 10, Mojumder 88)
Myanmar 0
HT: 1-0

Mar 25
Bangladesh 0
Philippines 3 (Araneta 41, Guirado 55, 80)
HT: 0-1

Mar 25
Myanmar 1 (Zaw Htat-aung pen 25)
Palestine 3 (Alyan 39, 90, Mahajna 71)
HT: 1-1

AFC CHALLENGE CUP QUALS – GP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palestine	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Philippines	3	1	2	0	4	1	5
Bangladesh	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Myanmar	3	0	1	2	2	6	1

Group B

In Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

Mar 21
Turkmenistan 3 (Urazov 6, Amanov 46, Karadanov 86)
Pakistan 0
HT: 1-0

Mar 21
India 3 (Lalpekhlua 32, Chhetri 76, Shaikh 88)
Taiwan 0
HT: 1-0

Mar 23
Pakistan 1 (Mehmood 32)
India 3 (Lalpekhlua 67, 90+4, Dias 90)
HT: 1-0

Mar 23
Taiwan 0
Turkmenistan 2 (Shamuradov 73, Hangeldiyev 76)
HT: 0-0

Mar 25
Turkmenistan 1 (Chonkayev pen 52)
India 1 (Lalpekhlua 60)
HT: 0-0

Mar 25
Taiwan 0
Pakistan 2 (Mehmood 26, Bashir 67)
HT: 0-1

AFC CHALLENGE CUP QUALS – GP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
India	3	2	1	0	7	2	7
Turkmenistan	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
Pakistan	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Taiwan	3	0	0	3	0	7	0

Group C

In Male, Maldives

Mar 21
Tajikistan 1 (Sydykov og 88)
Kyrgyzstan 0
HT: 0-0

Mar 21
Maldives 4 (Naseer 2, Ashfaq 41, 84, 88)
Cambodia 0
HT: 2-0

Mar 23
Kyrgyzstan 1 (Abdul Ghani og 87)
Maldives 2 (Ashad 5, Qasim 79)
HT: 0-1
Sent off: Baimatov (Kyrgyzstan) 76min

Mar 23
Cambodia 0
Tajikistan 3 (Davronov 2, Ergashev 83, Rabimov 89)
HT: 0-1

Mar 25
Tajikistan 0
Maldives 0

Mar 25
Cambodia 3 (Sokumpheak 39, 49, Rithy 89)
Kyrgyzstan 4 (Sydykov 5, Usanov 45+1, Uulu 80, 85)
HT: 1-2

AFC CHALLENGE CUP QUALS – GP C – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maldives	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
Tajikistan	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
Kyrgyzstan	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
Cambodia	3	0	0	3	3	11	0

Group D

In Kathmandu, Nepal

Apr 7	Afghanistan v Nepal
	North Korea v Sri Lanka
Apr 9	Sri Lanka v Afghanistan
	Nepal v North Korea
Apr 11	North Korea v Afghanistan
	Nepal v Sri Lanka

Top 2 in each group qualify for the finals, to be staged in 2012

UAE TOURNAMENT

In Sharjah

Mar 26
Kuwait 1 (Al Enezi pen 38)
Jordan 1 (Abdel Fattah pen 23)
HT: 1-1

Mar 26
North Korea 0
Iraq 2 (Abdul Zahra 53, 71)
HT: 0-0

Mar 29
Jordan 1 (Abdel Fattah 30)
North Korea 1 (Pak Song-chol 34)
HT: 1-1

Mar 29
Kuwait 1 (Al Mousawi 2)
Iraq 0
HT: 1-0

UAE TOURNAMENT – FINAL*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuwait	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Iraq	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Jordan	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
North Korea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

**Only 2 rounds of games were played*

FRIENDLIES

Wednesday, March 16

Mar 16 - San Juan
Argentina 4 (Chavez 20, Mouche 35, 53, Aued 71)
Venezuela 1 (Arismendi 30)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Puga (Chl)
Argentina: Garcia (Marchesin 46) - Pillud (Diaz 46), Maidana, Lopez, Chavez, Yacob (Rinaudo 61), Rojas (Monzon 33), Valeri, Moralez (Aued 56), Mouche, Defederico (Sperduti 46).
Venezuela: Morales - Romero (A Gonzalez 46), Salazar (Di Giorgi 56), Vizcarrondo, Cichero, Jimenez (E Hernandez 73), Seijas, Lucena, C Gonzalez (Gomez 59), Arismendi (Chourio 66), Pena (Reyes 59).

Mar 16 - Maun
Botswana 1 (Tshireletso 65)
Namibia 1 (Kamuhanga 33)
HT: 0-1

Thursday, March 17

Mar 17 - Pokhara
Nepal 1 (Shahukhala 29)
Bhutan 0
HT: 1-0

Saturday, March 19

Mar 19 - Pokhara
Nepal 2 (Chhetri 24, Gurung 75)
Bhutan 1 (Chencho 90+1)
HT: 1-0

Thursday, March 24

Mar 24 - Havana
Cuba 0
El Salvador 1 (D Alas 73)
HT: 0-0
Cuba: Castellanos - Marquez, R Fernandez, Y Colome, Dranguet, Francisco (Ramos 77), J Colome, A Cervantes, Martinez, Mesa (Coroneaux 58), Linares.
El Salvador: Portillo (Montes 65) - Garcia, Anaya (Messias 21), Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor, Turcios, R Sanchez (D Alas 46), Quintanilla (Romero 59), Alvarez (A Flores 64), J Alas (Moscoso 85), Blanco.

Friday, March 25

Mar 25 - Wuhan
China 1 (Boyens og 3)
New Zealand 1 (McGlinchey 53)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Toma (Jap)
China: Zeng Cheng (Cheng Yuelei 34) - Du Wei, Cui Peng, Deng Zhuoxiang, Yan Xiangchuang (Hao Junmin 65), Liu Jianye, Li Weifeng, Yu Hanchao, Rong Hao, Huang Bowen, Yu Dabao.
New Zealand: Moss - Vicelich, Smith, Boyens (Boxall 46), Lochhead, McGlinchey (Clapham 89), Brockie (Fitzgerald 78), Mulligan, Wood (Barbarouses 46), Smeltz, Killen (Rojas 78).

Mar 25 - Tallinn
Estonia 2 (Vassiljev 61, Zahovaiko 65)
Uruguay 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,817. **Ref:** Munukka (Fin)
Estonia: Pareiko - Enar Jaager, Piiroja, Rahn, Sidorenkov, Kruglov (Kink 62), Dmitrijev (Oper 79), Vunk, Purje (S Puri 56), Saag (Vassiljev 58), Ahjupera (Zahovaiko 57).
Uruguay: Castillo - M Pereira, Lugano, Victorino, Fucile (Scotti 69), Arevalo, Perez (Eguren 69), Ramirez (A Pereira 56), Hernandez, Abreu (S Fernandez 69), Forlan.

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Farewell...Zewlakow says goodbye to international football

POLAND

A love affair

Defender Michal Zewlakow, who now plays his club football for Ankaragucu in Turkey, wore the captain's armband on his 102nd and final appearance for his country in the 0-0 draw with Greece at the home of former club Olympiakos.

"If it is possible for a player to fall in love with a club, then my club is definitely Olympiakos," said the 34-year-old.

"You can always say you could have done more, but recently I looked at the list of the players I had played against – Josep Guardiola, Andoni Zubizarreta, the De Boer brothers, Rooney and Ibrahimovic. I was really part of the big football world so it was not a waste of time for me."

PORTUGAL

Debut double

Porto midfielder Ruben Micael scored twice on his debut as Portugal beat Finland 2-0.

SCOTLAND

Danes in town

Denmark will visit Hampden Park for an international friendly on August 10.

Mar 25 - Montego Bay
Jamaica 0
Venezuela 2 (Fedor 64, Moreno 67)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Wijngaarde (Sur)
Jamaica: Miller - Thomas, J Taylor (Damian Williams 46), Dicoy Williams, Phillips (Bryan 59), Austin, Stephenson (Earle 68), Watson (Boyd 81), Richards (Swaby 59), Cummings (Smith 59), Vernan.
Venezuela: Morales - Vizcarrondo, Di Giorgi, Cichero (Fuenmayor 90), Fedor (Arismendi 81), Rincon, Seijas (Orozco 60), Moreno (M Rondon 78), Rosales (Lucena 90), Chourio (Gomez 84), Perozo.

Mar 25 - Kaunas
Lithuania 2 (Mikoliunas 18, E Cesnauskis 29)
Poland 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 4,500. **Ref:** Treimanis (Lat)
Lithuania: Karcemarskas (Setkus 46) - Stankevicius, Skerla (Zvirgzdauskas 46), Zaliukas, Kijanskas, E Cesnauskis (Borovskij 82), Panka (Razanauskas 88), Mikoliunas (D Cesnauskis 46), Ivaskevicius, Danilevicius (Galkevicius 70), Labukas.
Poland: Malkowski - Piszczek, Glowacki, Glik, Sadlok, Murawski (Peszko 46), Dudka (Jodlowiec 85), A Mierzejewski (Grosicki 46), Blaszczykowski (Pawlowski 85), Obraniak (Guerreiro 69), R Lewandowski (Kucharczyk 74).

Mar 25 - Podgorica
Montenegro 1 (Vukcevic 90)
Uzbekistan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Glodovic (Ser)
Montenegro: M Bozovic - Pavicevic (Balic 86), Batak, Savic, Jovanovic (Delibasic 71), Pekovic (Zverotic 61), Drincic, Novakovic (V Bozovic 20), Kascelan (Grbic 53), Djalovic (Vukcevic 76), Beciraj.
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Mullajanov, Denisov, Tukhtakhodjaev, Aleksejev, Tursunov, Haydarov (Ibrohimov 73), Kapadze, Salomov (Karpenko 46), Otakuziyev (Murzoev 56), Smolyachenko (Novkarov 46).

Mar 25 - Panama City
Panama 2 (Gomez 19, Renteria 84)
Bolivia 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Lopez (Gtm)
Panama: Penedo - R Torres, Baloy, Barahona (G Torres 67), Machado, L Henriquez, Quintero (Cooper 59), A Henriquez (Moreno 86), Gomez (Bonagas 62), B Perez (Addles 77), Tejada (Renteria 70).
Bolivia: Arias - Rodriguez, Alvarez (Bejarano 46), Ronald Rivero, Flores, R Garcia (Gomez 83), Pedriel (Andaveris 77), Cardozo, Raldes, Loaiza (Robles 59), J A Castillo.

Mar 25 - Seoul
South Korea 4 (Lee Jung-soo 28, Kim Jung-woo 44, Park Chu-young 83, Lee Keun-ho 90+3)
Honduras 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 31,224. **Ref:** Ryoji (Jap)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Lee Jung-soo, Hwang Jae-won, Kim Young-kwon, Cho Young-cheol (Choi Hyo-jin 81), Ki Sung-yueng, Kim Bo-kyung (Lee Keun-ho 56), Lee Chung-young (Ji Dong-won 75), Lee Yong-rae (Cho Chan-ho 87), Kim Jung-woo (Yoon Bit-garam 87), Park Chu-young (Park Gi-dong 89).
Honduras: N Valladares - Johnny Palacios, O Chavez (Norales 66), Figueroa, Leveron, Izaguirre (E Martinez 67), Claros (Acevedo 81), Thomas, De Leon (M Martinez 86), Welcome (Costly 58), W Martinez.

Saturday, March 26

Mar 26 - San Jose
Costa Rica 2 (Saborio 38, Brenes 45+1)
China 2 (Gao Lin 47, 90+2)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Costa Rica: Alvarado - G Martinez, Umana, Marshall, Oviedo, Myrie (Mora 84), Borges, Bolanos (Elizondo 75), Brenes (Urena 64), Barrantes (Leal 79), Saborio (Fonseca 79).
China: Yang Zhi - Zheng Zhi, Ma Chongchong (Jin Jingdao 61), Yang Hao, Qu Bo (Ye Weichao 77), Lu Peng, Zhang Chenglin, Lang Zheng, Zhang Linpeng, Yu Hai (Zhang Xizhe 62), Mao Jianqing (Gao Lin 46).

Mar 26 - Madrid
Ecuador 0
Colombia 2 (Guarin 25, Falcao 75)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Mateu Lahoz (Spa)
Ecuador: Dominguez - Paredes, Campos, I Mina, Nazareno, Valencia (Palacios 76), Castillo (Montano 76), Noboa, Saritama, W Ayovi (Montero 66), J Ayovi.
Colombia: Ospina - Zuniga, Yepes, L Perea, Armero, Aguilar, Sanchez, Guarin, Soto (Ramos 43), Montano (Carbonero 63), Falcao (Rodallega 86).

Mar 26 - Oakland, USA
Mexico 3 (J Hernandez 6, 34, Guardado 38)
Paraguay 1 (C Riveros 86)
HT: 3-0
Mexico: Talavera - F Rodriguez, Salcido, Osorio (Aguilar 79), Marquez, Torrado, I Castro, Naelson (G Dos Santos 71), Guardado (Torres 65), Barrera (Vela 76), J Hernandez (De Nigris 65).
Paraguay: Villar - Veron (M Caceres 71), Alcaraz, Da Silva, Vera, C Riveros, Torres, N Ortigoza (Perez 60), E Benitez (O Cardozo 60), Martinez (Estigarribia 60), Barrios.

Mar 26 - Leiria
Portugal 1 (Silvestre Varela 16)
Chile 1 (Fernandez 41)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Blom (Hol)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Joao Pereira (Silvio 40), Rolando, Ricardo Carvalho (Pepe 46), Fabio Coentrao, Carlos Martins (Paulo Machado 71), Raul Meireles, Joao Moutinho, Nani (Danny 84), Helder Postiga (Hugo Almeida 81), Silvestre Varela (Quaresma 60).
Chile: Bravo - P Contreras, Ponce, Jara, Isla (Orellana 82), Carmona, Fernandez, Medel, Vidal, Sanchez, Beausejour (Fierro 66).

Mar 26 - East Rutherford
United States 1 (Agudelo 59)
Argentina 1 (Cambiasso 42)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 78,936. **Ref:** Garcia (Mex)
United States: Howard - Spector (Chandler 46), DeMerit, Onyewu, Bocanegra, Jones (Agudelo 46), Bradley, Edu, Dempsey, Donovan, Altidore.
Argentina: Andujar - Zanetti, N Burdisso, G Milito, Rojo, Banega, Mascherano, Cambiasso (Biglia 73), Di Maria, Messi, Lavezzi.

Sunday, March 27

Mar 27 - London
Scotland 0
Brazil 2 (Neymar 42, pen 77)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 53,087. **Ref:** Webb (Eng)
Scotland: McGregor - Hutton, Berra (D Wilson 73), G Caldwell, Crainey, Adam (Snodgrass 78), Whittaker (Commons 64), Brown, Morrison (Cowie 90), McArthur (Bannan 56), K Miller (Mackail-Smith 87).
Brazil: Julio Cesar - Daniel Alves, Lucio, Thiago Silva, Andre Santos, Lucas Leiva (Sandro 86), Ramires, Elano (Elias 82), Jadson (Lucas Rodrigues 72), Leandro Damiao (Jonas 78), Neymar (Renato Augusto 89).

Mar 27 - Colombo
Sri Lanka 2 (Shafraz pen 12, Zain 80)
Tajikistan 2 (Ibragin 56, Dilshad 73)
HT: 1-0

Mar 27 - Basseterre
St Kitts & Nevis 0
Grenada 0
Ref: Matthew (SKN)
St Kitts & Nevis: Byron - K Mitchum, Harris, Wigley, O Mitchum, Lewis (O'Loughlin 63), Lake (Howe 76), Hughes (Tishan Hanley 63), A Saddler (Elliott 71), Tiran Hanley (Warner 69), Liburd (Challenger 85).
Grenada: A Baptiste (Noel 46) - Langaigne, S Rennie (Mark 71), R Charles, Modeste, Cyrus, D Daniel (Joseph 61), Marshall, Facey (Sampson 65), M Phillip (Smith 71).

Monday, March 28

Mar 28 - Mazatenango
Guatemala 1 (Ruiz 41)
Bolivia 1 (Pedriel 73)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Guatemala: Jerez - Noriega, Flores, G Cabrera, Lopez, Leon (Pezzarossi 61), Velasquez, E Gonzalez (Montepeque 77), Pappa (Ordonez 81), Ramirez, Ruiz.
Bolivia: Arias (Galarza 65) - Rodriguez, Raldes, Ronald Rivero, L Gutierrez, Flores, Robles, J Vaca, Campos, Cardozo, J A Castillo (Pedriel 57).

Tuesday, March 29

Mar 29 - Antalya, Turkey
Belarus 0
Canada 1 (Hainault 58)
HT: 0-0
Belarus: Veremko (Amelchenko 46) - Molosh, Shitov, Martynovich, Sosnovsky, Omelyanchuk (Kulchy 78), Kislyak (Kornilenko 62), Zhavnerchik (Bychenok 46), V Hleb (Sitko 53), Kalachev, Kovel (Putsilo 81).
Canada: Borjan (Hirschfeld 46) - Ledgerwood, Hainault, McKenna, Klukowski, Hutchinson, Johnson (Edgar 77), Pacheco (Ricketts 66), Jackson (Peters 81), Simpson, Friend (Nakajima-Farran 86).

Mar 29 - Wuhan
China 3 (Huang Bowen 17, Yang Xu 37, 86)
Honduras 0
HT: 2-0
China: Cheng Yuelei - Li Xuepeng, Liu Yu, Zhao Peng, Cui Peng, Yang Xu, Liu Jianye, Feng Renliang, Huang Bowen, Hao Junmin, Deng Zhuoxiang.
Used subs: Wang Song, Liu Xiaodong, Yan Xiangchuang, Yu Tao, Rong Hao.
Honduras: N Valladares - O Chavez, Figueroa, Norales, Acevedo, Claros (Mejia 65), Thomas, De Leon (E Martinez 59), W Martinez (M Martinez 46), R Nunez (Welcome 77), Costly (Rojas 74).

Mar 29 - The Hague, Holland
Colombia 0
Chile 2 (Fernandez 6, Beausejour 30)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Vink (Hol)
Colombia: Ospina - Zuniga (L Perea 18), Yepes, C Zapata, Armero, Sanchez (Cuadrado 53), D Moreno, Guarin, Aguilar, Ramos (Falcao 63), Rodallega.
Chile: Bravo - P Contreras (O Gonzalez 87), Ponce, Jara, Isla, Medel, Vidal (Estrada 82), Beausejour (Jorquera 76), Fernandez, Sanchez, Mancilla (Munoz 63).

Mar 29 - San Jose
Costa Rica 0
Argentina 0
Ref: Rodriguez (Mex)
Costa Rica: Navas - Duarte, Acosta, Oviedo (Leal 84), G Martinez, Marshall, Bolanos (Urena 76), Borges (Guzman 59), Mora (Elizondo 80), Ruiz (Barrantes 68), Saborio (J Martinez 88).
Argentina: Andujar - Angeleri, Garay, G Milito (Otamendi 46), Rojo, Banega (Belluschi 46), Mascherano (Bolatti 46), Biglia, Pastore, Sosa (Salvio 66), Gaitan.

Mar 29 - Havana
Cuba 0
Panama 2 (Renteria 38, Quintero 83)
HT: 0-1
Cuba: Molina - Marquez, R Fernandez, Dranguet, Y Colome, Francisco, Martinez (Munoz), A Cervantes, Mesa (Coroneaux), Linares (Cordobes), J Colome.
Panama: Penedo - Baloy, L Henriquez (Moreno), R Torres, Machado (Dassent), G Gomez, Barahona (Quintero), Bonaga (G Torres), Cooper, Renteria (Addles), B Perez.

Mar 29 - Larnaca
Cyprus 0
Bulgaria 1 (M Petrov 35)
HT: 0-1
Cyprus: Georgallides - Elia, Garpozis, Dobrasinovic (Merkis 46), Charalambous, Demetriou (Avraam 46), Satsias, Pavlou (Charalambides 46), Efrem (Christofi 69), Alexandrou (Michael 46), Mytidis (Makrides 66).
Bulgaria: V Stoyanov - Bandalovski, K Stoyanov, I Ivanov, Zanev, Gadzhev, S Petrov, Manolev (Dimitrov 64), Yanev, M Petrov (Delev 90), Genkov.

Mar 29 - San Salvador
El Salvador 2 (J Alas 41, Blanco 90+1)
Jamaica 3 (Richards 23, 25, Cummings 53)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Rodas (Gtm)
El Salvador: Montes - Garcia, Messias, Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor (E Sanchez 84), Turcios (D Alas 76), R Sanchez (Burgos 67), Quintanilla (Romero 56), Alvarez (A Flores 46), J Alas, Blanco.
Jamaica: Kerr - Dicoy Williams, Vernan, Thomas, Watson, Austin, Phillips, Damian Williams, Bryan (Edwards 67), Richards (Clennon 81), Cummings (Stephenson 73). *Sent off: Damian Williams 63min.*

Mar 29 - London
England 1 (Carroll 43)
Ghana 1 (Gyan 90+1)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 80,102. **Ref:** Cakir (Tur)
England: Hart - G Johnson (Lescott 46), Cahill, Jagielka, Baines, Milner, Barry, Wilshere (Jarvis 69), Downing, Carroll (Defoe 59), Young (Welbeck 81).
Ghana: Kingson - Paintsil, Vorsah (Jonathan Mensah 46), John Mensah, L Addy (Opare 46), Adiyiah (Tagoe 69), Annan (Boateng 46), Agyemang-Badu, K Asamoah (Inkoom 83), Muntari (A Ayew 59), Gyan.

Perfect start...Ruben Micael

SOUTH AFRICA

New youth hosts

The African Youth Championship has been moved away from Libya due to the current political situation and will now be held in South Africa from April 17 until May 1.

South Africa replace Libya in Group A, alongside Egypt, Lesotho and Mali, while Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria make up Group B. The semi-finalists will represent the continent at the Under-20 World Cup in Colombia this summer.

USA

Spanish warm-up

Reigning world and European champions Spain will meet Bob Bradley's side in a friendly at the Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts on June 4 in the USA's final warm-up before the Gold Cup.

WALES

Role for Ramsey

Arsenal's Aaron Ramsey, who became his country's youngest captain when he led the side against England at the age of 20 years and 90 days, has been named permanent skipper.

Young blood...Ramsey

Mar 29 - Malabo
Equatorial Guinea 1 (Fidjeu 42)
Gambia 0
HT: 1-0

Mar 29 - Paris
France 0
Croatia 0
Att: 60,000. **Ref:** Kelly (Rlr)
France: Lloris - Reveillere, Rami (Sakho 90), Mexes, Clichy, A Diarra, Matuidi (M'Vila 87), Menez (Remy 60), Nasri (Gourcuff 88), Malouda (Ribery 59), Benzema (Gameiro 75).
Croatia: Runje (Pletikosa 46) - Corluka, Simunic, Lovren, Pranjic (Strinic 24; Rakitic 46), Srna (Vida 81), Vukojevic, Perisic (Petric 71), Kranjcar, Modric, Jelavic (Kalinic 56).

Mar 29 - Monchengladbach
Germany 1 (Gomez 26)
Australia 2 (Carney 61, Wilkshire pen 64)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,152. **Ref:** Lannoy (Fra)
Germany: Wiese - Trasch, A Friedrich, Hummels, Schmelzer, Bender, Schweinsteiger (Kroos 64), Schurrle, Muller (Gotze 64), Podolski, Gomez (Klose 73).
Australia: Schwarzer - Wilkshire, Neill, Ognenovski, Carney, Emerton, Valeri, Jedinak, McKay, Kewell (Kruse 80), Holman (McGrath 90).

Mar 29 - Piraeus
Greece 0
Poland 0
Att: 12,000. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Greece: Chalkias - Vyntra, A Papadopoulos, Moras, Lagos, Karagounis (Katsouranis 73), Kafes, Kone (Limberopoulos 66), Fetfatzidis (Salpigidis 76), Samaras (Torosidis 76), Mitroglu (Ninis 58).
Poland: Sandomierski - Piszczek, Zewlakow (Jodlowiec 63), Glowacki, Sadlok, Peszko (Grosicki 76), Blaszczykowski, Dudka, A Mierzejewski (Murawski 46), Obraniak (Guerreiro 83), R Lewandowski (Kucharczyk 83).

Mar 29 - San Diego, USA
Mexico 1 (De Nigris 58)
Venezuela 1 (Vizcarrondo 73)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Salazar (USA)
Mexico: G Ochoa - Salcido, Moreno, Juarez, Marquez (Duenas 46), Torrado (I Castro 46), G Dos Santos (Naelson 70), Guardado (Vela 46), L Perez, Barrera (Calderon 82), J Hernandez (De Nigris 46).
Venezuela: Morales - Vizcarrondo, Cichero, Rosales (Lucena 82), Perozo, Di Giorgi, Rincon, Seijas (Orozco 66), Chourio (Gomez 61), Fedor (E Hernandez 85), Moreno (Arismendi 77).

Mar 29 - Abuja
Nigeria 3 (Musa 4, Anichebe 48, I Uche 90)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0
Nigeria: Aiyenugba - Okonkwo, Ambrose, Yobo (Adeleye 46), Taiwo, Musa, Obi (Ogude 46), Mikel, Nsofor (Okoronkwo 46), Anichebe (Ehiosun 67), P Utaka (I Uche 46).
Kenya: Origi - Situma, D Odhiambo, Shikokoti, E Ochieng, Mariga, J Mohammed (Okoth 71), Mugabe, Mugalia (Waruru 56), Nyagah (Omondi 72), G Odhiambo (Were 59).

Mar 29 - Muscat
Oman 2 (Mubarak pen 10, pen 85)
Tunisia 1 (Allagui 63)
HT: 1-0
Tunisia: Jeridi - Hammami, Haggui, Bejaoui (Jemal 62), Hosni, Ben Khalfallah (Chehoudi 46), Traoui, Korbi, Chedli (Jemaa 65), Allagui, Chermiti (Darragi 46).

Mar 29 - The Hague, Holland
Peru 0
Ecuador 0
Ref: Braamhaar (Hol)
Peru: Libman - Carmona (Revoredo 59), Acasiete, Ramos, Vilchez, Tragodara (Gonzales 58), Cruzado, Guevara (Rabanal 28), Vargas (Lobaton 59), Guerrero (Advincula 73), Pizarro (Rengifo 87).
Sent off: Ramos 22min.
Ecuador: Banguera - Minda, Guagua, I Mina, Noboa (Paredes 68), Quiroz, Castillo, Saritama, Montano (Palacios 83), J Ayovi, W Ayovi (Nazareno 68).

Mar 29 - Aveiro
Portugal 2 (Ruben Micael 11, 70)
Finland 0
HT: 1-0
Portugal: Eduardo - Nelson, Pepe (Ricardo Carvalho 77), Bruno Alves, Fabio Coentrao (Silvio 61), Carlos Martins (Joao Moutinho 46), Raul Meireles (Paulo Machado 61), Ruben Micael (Andre Santos 74), Quaresma (Nani 67), Hugo Almeida, Danny.
Finland: Fredrikson - Pasanen, Heikkinen, Arkivuo, Raitala, Sjolund (Porokara 46), R Eremenko (Toivio 86), Hetemaj (Mannstrom 62), Vayrynen (Sparv 73), A Eremenko (Riski 46), Sadik (Forssell 72).

Mar 29 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Kasola 4)
Russia 1 (Pavlyuchenko 34)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Al Aawaji (Sau)
Qatar: Budawood (Malick 46) - B Mohammed, Abdulmajed, Ismail (Razak 56), Kasola (Haroon 84), Mubarak (Muftah 82), Quaye (M Mohammed 88), Abdulmajid (Fabio Cesar 43), Ahmed (Al Shihab 73), Soria (Ibrahim 37; Al Hamad 90+3), E S Mohammed (Afif 68).
Russia: Ryzhikov (Malafeev 46) - Ignashevich (A Berezutsky 46), V Berezutsky, Anyukov, Zhirkov (Makeev 46), Zyryanov (Semshov 46), Denisov (Glushakov 46), Shirokov (Bilyaletdinov 46), Ionov (Torbinsky 46), Arshavin (Pogrebnyak 46), Pavlyuchenko.

Mar 29 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 2 (Long 15, Fahey pen 47)
Uruguay 3 (Lugano 12, Cavani 22, Hernandez 39)
HT: 1-3. **Att:** 25,611. **Ref:** Ennjimi (Fra)
Rep of Ireland: Westwood - Foley, Kelly, O'Dea, Clark (Delaney 75), Lawrence (McGeady 79), Green, Fahey (Gibson 65), Keogh (Stokes 85), McCarthy (Treacy 65), Long.
Uruguay: Muslera - Godin, Lugano, Caceres, M Pereira, Arevalo (Gargano 64), Perez (Scotti 90), A Pereira, Cavani, Forlan, Hernandez (Eguren 84).

Mar 29 - Trnava
Slovakia 1 (Holosko 32)
Denmark 2 (Salata og 3, Krohn-Dehli 72)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 4,927. **Ref:** Fernandez Borbalan (Spa)
Slovakia: Kello - Pekarik, Skrtel, Salata (Durica 46), Luksik (Sebo 46), Kopunek (Kascak 77), Hamsik, Cech, Piroska, Holosko (Kona 80), Jendrisek (Vittek 60).
Denmark: Andersen - Jacobsen (Thomsen 60), Mathias Jorgensen, Svensson, S Poulsen, J Poulsen (Lorentzen 46), Kvist, Schone (Eriksen 61), Rommedahl (Enevoldsen 32), Bendtner (Junker 76), Krohn-Dehli (Skoubo 83).

Mar 29 - Colombo
Sri Lanka 0
Tajikistan 2 (Davrojan 21, Dilshod 23)
HT: 0-2

Mar 29 - Kiev
Ukraine 0
Italy 2 (Rossi 28, Matri 80)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Nikolaev (Rus)
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi - Fedetskyi, Tymoshchuk, Rakytskyi, Oshypko, Stepanenko, Rotan (Oliynyk 76), Husiev, Aliev (Devic 53), Yarmolenko, Seleznyov.
Italy: Viviano - Maggio (Santon 46), Gastaldello, Chiellini (Astori 17), Criscito, Marchisio (Parolo 88), Montolivo, Nocerino, Aquilani (Giovinco 46), Gilardino (Bonucci 76), Rossi (Matri 62).
Sent off: Astori 74min.

Mar 29 - Nashville
United States 0
Paraguay 1 (O Cardozo 18)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 29,059. **Ref:** Benigno (Hnd)
United States: Hahnemann (Yelldell 46) - Chandler (Spector 80), DeMerit (Bocanegra 41), Ream, Bornstein (Kljestan 77), Dempsey, Edu (Jones 46), Bradley, Donovan, Altidore (Lichaj 60), Agudelo.
Paraguay: Villar - M Caceres, Mareco, Da Silva, Samudio, Vera (Veron 79), Molinas (M Riveros 63), C Riveros, Perez (Martinez 68), O Cardozo (Barrios 79), Estigarribia (Torres 90+1).

Wednesday, March 30
Mar 30 - Marrakech
Morocco 1 (Tair pen 48)
Botswana 1 (Moatlhaping pen 70)
HT: 0-0

2011 CONCACAF GOLD CUP FINALS

To be staged in the United States

Group stage draw & match schedule

Group A
Costa Rica
Cuba
El Salvador
Mexico

05.06.11 Costa Rica v Cuba (Arlington)
05.06.11 Mexico v El Salvador (Arlington)
09.06.11 Costa Rica v El Salvador (Charlotte)
09.06.11 Cuba v Mexico (Charlotte)
12.06.11 El Salvador v Cuba (Chicago)
12.06.11 Mexico v Costa Rica (Chicago)

Group B
Grenada
Guatemala
Honduras
Jamaica

06.06.11 Jamaica v Grenada (Carson)
06.06.11 Honduras v Guatemala (Carson)
10.06.11 Jamaica v Guatemala (Miami)
10.06.11 Grenada v Honduras (Miami)
13.06.11 Guatemala v Grenada (Harrison)
13.06.11 Honduras v Jamaica (Harrison)

Group C
Canada
Guadeloupe
Panama
United States

07.06.11 Panama v Guadeloupe (Detroit)
07.06.11 United States v Canada (Detroit)
11.06.11 Canada v Guadeloupe (Tampa)
11.06.11 United States v Panama (Tampa)
14.06.11 Canada v Panama (Kansas City)
14.06.11 Guadeloupe v United States (Kansas City)

Top 2 in each group and the 2 3rd-placed teams with the best record qualify for quarter-finals

2014 WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

ASIA SECTION
1st round draw

Afghanistan v Palestine
Bangladesh v Pakistan
Cambodia v Laos
Malaysia v Taiwan
Mongolia v Myanmar
Nepal v East Timor
Sri Lanka v Philippines
Vietnam v Macau
1st legs - June 29, 2011; 2nd legs - July 3, 2011

Winners qualify for 2nd round; losers eliminated

2nd round draw

China v Cambodia OR Laos
Iran v Maldives
Iraq v Yemen
Jordan v Nepal OR East Timor
Kuwait v Sri Lanka OR Philippines
Lebanon v Bangladesh OR Pakistan
Oman v Mongolia OR Myanmar
Qatar v Vietnam OR Macau
Saudi Arabia v Hong Kong
Singapore v Malaysia OR Taiwan
Syria v Tajikistan
Thailand v Afghanistan OR Palestine
Turkmenistan v Indonesia
United Arab Emirates v India
Uzbekistan v Kyrgyzstan
1st legs - July 23, 2011; 2nd legs - July 28, 2011

Winners qualify for 3rd round; losers eliminated

Byes to 3rd round:
Australia, Bahrain, Japan, North Korea, South Korea

The main World Cup qualifying draw, including the Asia section 3rd round (group stage), will be made in Rio de Janeiro on July 30, 2011

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EUROPE
Last-gasp Inter keep Italian flag flying

Still going strong...Internazionale players celebrate their remarkable Champions League comeback against Bayern in Munich

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Internazionale are Italian football's sole remaining representatives in European competition after they squeezed through at Bayern Munich's expense to reach the quarter-finals.

Bayern had looked in an unassailable position at half-time in the second leg of their last-16 meeting with Inter. An early Samuel Eto'o goal in Munich had cancelled out Bayern's 1-0 away win, but goals from Mario Gomez and Thomas Muller had put the Germans 3-1 up on aggregate at the break.

In the second half, Bayern looked to add to their lead but were thwarted on several occasions by Inter keeper Julio Cesar. Wesley Sneijder brought the visitors back in the game with 25 minutes remaining and then Goran Pandev grabbed a last-minute goal to make the scores level on aggregate and send Inter through on away goals.

Elsewhere Roma, having lost the first leg in Rome 3-2, melted in Donetsk, losing Philippe Mexes to a first-half red card and going down to Shakhtar 6-2 on aggregate.

Milan, who had lost 1-0 at home to Tottenham Hotspur thanks to a Peter Crouch breakaway goal, could not find a way back into the tie in the return at White Hart Lane, drawing the second leg 0-0.

Tottenham's north London rivals Arsenal bowed out of the competition after a weak second-leg performance against Barcelona. Arsenal had won the first leg 2-1 following a stirring second-half comeback. In the return leg, manager Arsene Wenger complained bitterly about the sending-off of Robin Van Persie for a second yellow card but he could not excuse the fact that his side failed to get a shot on target in the entire 90 minutes. Even Arsenal's goal was an own goal, headed in by Sergio Busquets, as Lionel Messi (twice) and Xavi turned the screw in the second half to secure a 4-3 victory on aggregate.

Chelsea cruised through their tie against Copenhagen, winning 2-0 on aggregate, thanks to first-leg goals from Nicolas Anelka, with new signing Fernando Torres confined to the bench.

Real Madrid broke their hoodoo against Lyon, finally beating the French side for the first time in eight meetings, with Karim Benzema scoring in both legs against his former side as the Spanish side went through 4-1 on aggregate.

Manchester United never looked entirely convincing against Marseille, drawing the first leg in France and then putting on a nervous performance in the return, as two goals from Javier Hernandez proved enough to take them through to the quarter-finals.

Schalke, despite sacking coach Felix Magath, overcame Valencia 4-2 on aggregate to ensure German representation in the final eight. Raul, inevitably, scored against Spanish opposition in the 1-1 draw in the first leg in Spain, but Jefferson Farfan was the star of the return game, scoring twice to ensure a comfortable aggregate victory.

EUROPA LEAGUE

Portuguese football was the undoubted Europa League victor, with Porto, Benfica and Braga through to the quarter-finals after beating CSKA Moscow, Paris Saint-Germain and Liverpool respectively.

Dutch clubs also have a strong representation in the last eight, with Twente, 3-2 winners over Zenit St Petersburg, and PSV, who saw off Rangers, through to the quarter-finals.

In contrast, English and Scottish clubs saw their involvement in the competition come to an end, with Manchester City going down to Dynamo Kyiv and going out with Liverpool and Rangers.

The Russian challenge also faltered, with only Spartak Moscow, impressive 4-0 aggregate conquerors of Ajax going through as Zenit and CSKA Moscow exited.

Villarreal were installed as joint favourites, along with Porto, to reach the Final on May 18 in Dublin after their 5-3 aggregate victory over Leverkusen.

John Holmesdale

Through...Porto's Fredy Guarin (centre) helped beat CSKA Moscow in the Europa League

AUSTRALIA Roar calling the shots

In November last year Raymond Verheijen, the internationally renowned fitness coach, put up a post on Twitter congratulating Brisbane Roar on becoming the leading team in the A-League. Even by then, a third of the way through the 2010-11 season, Brisbane were already well in the clear as league leaders and on their way to completing a record-setting campaign, ultimately losing just once in 33 games.

Verheijen targeted Roar coach Ange Postecoglou and his assistant, Ken Stead, for his praise – and with good reason. It was Stead, a student of Verheijen and his unique methods, who had prepared the team's conditioning regime which, in turn, ensured the players maintained the level of fitness required for Brisbane's high-intensity, all-movement game and left the team low on injuries. Stead was just the partner Postecoglou needed if his decision to build success on an all-passing, all-possession game was to succeed.

And it did, culminating in the Grand Final against Central Coast Mariners in front of a capacity 52,000 at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium. Full of drama and twists, but devoid of goals until six minutes into extra time, it was Mariners who broke the deadlock, and then went into a 2-0 lead seven minutes later against a team they hadn't beaten in four previous meetings.

Roar of triumph...Paartalu (centre) leads the celebrations as Brisbane win the A-League Grand Final after a penalty shoot-out

But the pulsating climax had only begun. With less than four minutes left, Brisbane pulled one back through their effervescent Brazilian winger Henrique. Then, with the clock showing 120 minutes, Brisbane took a corner and with the last touch of the game their midfield anchor Erik Paartalu rose to head in the equaliser. Roar won the penalty shoot-out and the Suncorp Stadium, its pitch metres under water during the Queensland floods just a few weeks earlier, became a theatre of dreams.

Yet the A-League, as a broad commercial venture, is far from the stuff of dreams. Average attendances were down to below 8,000 from a one-time high of 14,000; just two years after they were formed, North Queensland Fury were expelled from the league because of financial instability; and just about every club lost money.

Although Football Federation Australia (FFA) continues to trot out reminders of how start-up leagues like the MLS and the J.League underwent short-term declines after explosive starts, only to stabilise and surge again, the critics are unimpressed, saying the six-year-old A-League's problems are due to things more terminal: managerial incompetence.

They point to a scarcity of executives and strategists with an understanding of the football business and a genuine love of the game, and point a big finger at Ben Buckley, the FFA chief executive who is a former top-ranking Australian Rules official with no reference to football on his CV.

Hopes of an upturn rest in the rising quality of the football, led by Postecoglou's Brisbane, who some have nicknamed "Roarcelona". All others in the league, now reduced to 10 clubs after Fury's demise, are attempting to play precision football too, and long gone is the orgy of muscular play that characterised the competition's fledgling season in 2005-06.

The start of the coming season, so as not to clash with the climaxes of the winter-code campaigns of the AFL and the NRL, is not until October. It will be a long, pensive wait for those hoping for a turnaround in A-League fortunes.

Les Murray

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
MARCOS FLORES (Adelaide United)
Argentinian playmaker, signed from Chilean club Curico Unido, who drew wide admiration for his passing and spectacular goals.

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
MARCO ROJAS (Wellington Phoenix)
Born in New Zealand of Chilean immigrants, the 19-year old midfielder has great technique and quickness of both feet and mind. Now with Melbourne Victory.

COACH OF THE SEASON
ANGE POSTECOGLOU (Brisbane Roar)
The former Australia Under-20 coach led Brisbane on a record-breaking 28-game unbeaten run. Has signed a two-year extension.

Record breaker...Postecoglou

A-LEAGUE – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brisbane	30	18	11	1	58	26	65
Central Coast	30	16	9	5	50	31	57
Adelaide	30	15	5	10	51	36	50
Gold Coast	30	12	10	8	40	32	46
Melbourne V	30	11	10	9	45	39	43
Wellington P	30	12	5	13	39	41	41
Newcastle	30	9	8	13	29	33	35
Melbourne H	30	8	11	11	32	42	35
Sydney	30	8	10	12	35	40	34
Perth	30	5	8	17	27	54	23
N Queensland	30	4	7	19	28	60	19

Elimination finals
Adelaide 1 Wellington Phoenix 0
Gold Coast 1 Melbourne Victory 0

Minor semi-final
Adelaide 2 Gold Coast 3

Major semi-final
Central Coast v Brisbane 0-2, 2-2 (agg 2-4)

Preliminary Final
Central Coast 1 Gold Coast 0

Grand Final
Brisbane 2 Central Coast 2 (aet; Brisbane 4-2 on penalties)

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BRAZIL BRASILEIRO SERIE A 2011

KEY DATES

Season starts May 21, 2011
Season ends Dec 4, 2011

Ronaldo may have retired, but even without him this year's championship can boast a star-studded cast. And the fact that such talent is distributed around so many big clubs helps make the title race so difficult to predict.

To make things even more clouded early on, the opening rounds of the competition coincide with the decisive stages of the Libertadores Cup and the Brazilian Cup, and it is customary for those teams still in contention for these competitions to rest their best players for the league games and hope to make up lost ground later.

Unlike in World Cup years, there is no pause in 2011, which means that teams will lose key players to international call-ups for the Copa America and the World Youth Cup. And the big transfer window will inevitably change the line-ups.

A change in the fixture list will also see the final round of matches consist of local derbies after last year's suspicions that teams were deliberately losing games at the end of the season in situations when victory would have been in the interests of their city rivals. No one, it is hoped, will be allowed to give anything less than 100 per cent in a big local derby.

Champions **Fluminense** have had a turbulent time, with coach Muricy Ramalho resigning in March in protest, he said, at the club's poor structure, though internal politics is surely equally to blame. Replacement Abel Braga will only be free to take over on the eve of the kick-off. None of this is ideal, but if the likes of Fred and Deco can stay fit then the squad has impressive depth.

Big call...Ronaldinho turned down his childhood club Gremio, as well as Corinthians and Palmeiras, to join Flamego in January

Centre-forward Brandao, signed on loan from Marseille in March, could be the missing piece in coach Cuca's jigsaw for **Cruzeiro**. They play flowing football, with Argentinian playmaker Walter Montillo particularly impressive, although they lack a top class penalty-area operator. Throw in the excellence of goalkeeping captain Fabio and they should be title contenders.

Corinthians' transition to the post-Ronaldo era has been eased by the immediate success of striker Liedson, who was brought back from Portugal. Getting Adriano on board gives charismatic coach Tite an embarrassment of attacking riches. At the other end, the loss of Roberto Carlos and the retirement of centre-back William leaves the defence light. Even so, they will be disappointed with anything less than qualifying for the Libertadores.

Gremio striker Jonas was the hero of last year's incredible surge up the table, but he was sold and the club were unsuccessful in their quest to bring back Ronaldinho. Principal re-enforcement Carlos Alberto is an infuriatingly enigmatic figure and coach Renato Gaucho will be hard pushed to maintain the momentum picked up in 2010.

An awkward start to 2011 led to the reinstatement of Geninho for his third spell in charge of **Atletico Paranaense**. Ten years ago he took the club to their only title with a team starring the young Kleberson. He is now back and promising defender Dalton is an interesting signing, but with bigger clubs looking strong Atletico will do well to repeat last year's fifth place.

The loss of key players such as striker Jobson and midfielder Leandro Guerrero leaves **Botafogo** looking inferior to last year. Veteran coach Joel Santana was forced out in March and a more aggressive approach will be expected of his replacement Caio Junior.

Celso Roth and his **Internacional** side seem to have made a quick recovery from the embarrassment of losing to TP Mazembe in the Club World Cup. The Argentinian pair of midfielder Mauro Bolatti and striker Fernando Cavenaghi are interesting additions, and centre-forward Leandro Damiao has gone from club reserve to Brazil cap in three months.

Having bizarrely sacked coach Adilson Batista after losing just one of 11 games, Marcelo Martelotte is once more in caretaker charge at **Santos**, with the likely new boss seen as Muricy Ramalho, whose counter-attacking and set-piece playing style would seem at odds with the exuberant stuff the fans are used to.

The return of Elano adds quality and experience, but even if Neymar and Paulo Henrique Ganso stay, Santos will suffer from international call-ups in July and August.

Last year was a strange one for **Sao Paulo**, one of Brazil's leading clubs of recent times, but they should be back in contention for titles with a style of play much easier on the eye than the pragmatic and somewhat joyless way they ground out their three consecutive championship wins between 2006 and 2008. After 15 years, Rivaldo returns to the Brazilian championship, Luis Fabiano is also back and, along with new sensation Lucas, coach Paulo Cesar Carpeggiani has considerable firepower at his

Playmaker...Cruzeiro's Montillo (left) runs the show against Colombia's Deportes Tolima

Central figure...Deco will have a big role to play for defending champions Fluminense

disposal. Qualification for next year's Libertadores will be the minimum requirement.

A turbulent period of internal politics plus the reconstruction of their stadium would seem to make Luiz Felipe Scolari's **Palmeiras** unlikely challengers. Striker Kleber and Chilean playmaker Valdivia are prone to miss games through suspension and injuries, and an interesting crop of youngsters will look to veteran midfielder Marcos Assuncao for guidance.

Financial constraints have made the last few years difficult for **Vasco da Gama** and they made an appalling start to 2011. Things have looked up since Ricardo Gomes took charge, and the acquisitions of striker Alecsandro and midfielder Diego Souza have enriched the team's attacking options. One point of concern, though, is that key centre-back Dede looks set to leave in the transfer window.

"The old soldier" Dimas

Rising star... Leandro Damiao (left)

Filgueiras has been associated with **Ceara** since 1972, first as a full-back, then on the coaching staff and frequently as caretaker boss. Now he is in charge in this vital season of first division consolidation, aided by some interesting loan signings such as the veteran striker Iarley and talented midfield hopes Thiago Humberto and Sergio Mota.

Atletico Mineiro's strike partnership of Diego Tardelli and Obina have gone to Russia and China respectively, but the list of re-enforcements is headed by two fascinating cases, both hugely talented support strikers: Guilherme, bought from Dynamo Kyiv, and the often wayward Jobson. One of Brazil's most promising coaches, Dorival Junior has a reputation for working well with youngsters and there should be no repeat of last year's surprise battle against relegation.

This is the big moment for Ronaldinho. Does he want a return to the big time or is he happy to coast and enjoy *Carnaval*? Thiago Neves is another top playmaking re-enforcement for **Flamengo**, but the squad does seem to lack a top class centre-forward. Many supporters were disappointed that coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo vetoed the return of Adriano and they will pile on the pressure if it proves to be a mistake.

Former international midfielder Silas is back in charge of **Avai**, where he made his name as a coach, winning promotion in 2008 and taking them to sixth place the following year. A repeat would seem unlikely, though, as the squad looks thin. There is, however, the return of elegant playmaker Marquinhos, the key player in that 2009 campaign, to look forward to.

Atletico Goianiense only just stayed up last year on their return to the first division and coach Rene Simoes could be in for another difficult campaign. The most interesting addition to a workman-like squad is the loan signing of Pedro Ken, a midfielder who looked a fine prospect with Coritiba but needs a kick-start after injuries and lack of opportunities with Cruzeiro.

Financial constraints forced **Coritiba** to put their trust in youngsters last year. In difficult circumstances they bounced straight back to the top flight as second-division champions, but promptly lost coach Ney Franco, who took control of Brazil's youth sides. Replacement Marcelo Oliveira will hope to keep the momentum going.

Jorginho, World Cup-winning right-back and Dunga's assistant with Brazil, was made **Figueirense** boss in March and will attempt both to consolidate his own coaching career and the club's first division status. Former Paris Saint-Germain striker Reinaldo is the star attraction, while Venezuelan-born youngster Breitner an interesting signing from Santos.

Plenty of big clubs have gone down recently, but where most have bounced straight back, **Bahia** languished outside the top flight for seven years. In February, veteran coach Vagner Benazzi took charge of a squad where experienced Colombian Tressor Moreno is a talented acquisition. Some interesting players have arrived on loan from Corinthians, including Under-20 international Boquita, and Lulinha, the Under-17 sensation from 2007 who is still to make an impact at senior level.

After two consecutive promotions, **America** surely face a struggle to hang on to their newly won status and it would not be a surprise if Mauro Fernandes' run as the division's longest-serving coach is put under pressure sooner rather than later. Ex-Roma striker Fabio Junior is the main goal hope.

Tim Vickery

Caretaker...Santos boss Martelotte

This is a big moment for Ronaldinho. Does he want a return to the big time or is he happy to coast and enjoy *Carnaval*?

Focal point...striker Liedson joined Corinthians from Sporting Lisbon in January

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FINLAND VEIKKAUSLIIGA 2011

KEY DATES

Season starts April 28, 2011

Season ends October 22, 2011

It's been an unorthodox pre-season in Finland. First, the league's much-derided and seemingly impotent licensing committee shocked everyone by denying AC Oulu a licence on financial grounds, sparking astonished protests and frantic fund-raising in the northern port town. However, the club ran out of appeals and the Veikkausliiga will consist of 13 teams this year.

Then a Singaporean man was arrested at Helsinki Airport with a false passport and several players' phone numbers. Reports in the Far East suggest he was the man behind the fake Togo team that took on Bahrain last autumn.

His Finnish connections include 11 footballers who were swiftly arrested, including nine from Lapland side **RoPS**. The players were promptly sacked; relegation is now a strong possibility.

Tampere United were next on the chopping block. They received an offer to co-operate with a Singaporean firm last year, but said they did not sign a contract after taking advice from the Veikkausliiga. However, media reports suggested that they did take the money and their league licence is currently under review.

The Finnish FA has announced a plan to make the top flight a 12-team league by 2013, with each team playing 33 games, and the strict application of licensing rules will not harm this long-term aim.

In terms of realistic title contenders, it is difficult to see beyond **HJK**, who were dominant last year and have added Sebastian Mannstrom, Teemu Pukki and Berat Sadik to their squad. Jari Litmanen has also been training with them with a view to signing a contract.

Waiting...reigning champions HJK are hoping 40-year-old striker Litmanen will fancy yet another season of competitive football

Next up are perennial winter champions **Honka**. The Espoo side have traditionally played well in the winter before stuttering when the season starts, and true to form they have reached April's pre-season League Cup Final. New signing Dudu should add a cutting edge to a side that sometimes lacks penetration and they should be in their usual top-three slot.

Dudu's old club **KuPS** are going to have a slightly tougher time of it. They have retained the nucleus of the side that qualified for Europe, but it remains to be seen whether coach Esa Pekonen can find an alternative attacking threat.

Inter Turku are one of the more stable clubs in the Veikkausliiga, thanks to owner Stefan Hakans and coach Job Dragtsma, but they are capable of more exciting football. Dragtsma is well known for demanding a high level of performance from younger players. Midfielder Joni Kauko should have a breakthrough year this term with a lot of responsibility on his shoulders, and Croatian striker Domagoj Abramovic's performance up front will be key to their chances.

> In terms of realistic title contenders, it is difficult to see beyond HJK, who were dominant last year

Inter's city rivals **TPS** look a little more threadbare than in the fat years of former owner Seppo Sairanen's largesse, but they should be competitive. Njazi Kuqi adds muscle up front, and in Marko Rajamaki they have a coach with good motivational skills.

One side to watch will be **FF Jaro**. Their squad looks weak, full of last year's reserves and cast-offs from other clubs, but in Alexei Eremenko Sr they have one of the best coaches in the league. Mannstrom leaves a big hole to fill, but Eremenko is wily enough to do so while staying true to his attacking principles.

Mid-table is a cramped and congested place this year, with most teams having reduced their budgets. **JJK** have a squad that should improve on last year's second-bottom placing, as do **IFK Mariehamn**.

MYPA's slow decline follows that of the paper mill that originally founded the club. New coach Toni Korkeakunnas faces a tough challenge in his first season in charge at this level, but there is enough quality for the team to avoid a relegation battle.

It may not be possible to say the same for **VPS**, who lack an attacking threat and could see themselves dragged down towards the bottom of the table.

Haka look like they could struggle. Belt-tightening means they will rely heavily on Sierra Leonian striker Obi Metzger, but if he fulfils his potential – and there is every chance he could – they will have to replace him when the transfer window opens.

John Holmesdale

Responsibility...much is expected of Inter Turku midfielder Kauko (left) this season

ICELAND URVALSDEILD 2011

KEY DATES

Season starts May 8, 2011

Season ends October 1, 2011

AS Iceland's top division prepares for its longest-ever campaign, there is every possibility that the title-race will be as tense and as nail-biting as last year – with a number of clubs harbouring realistic championship aspirations.

The big kick-off on May 8 has thrown up one potentially mouth-watering clash, bringing together defending champions Breidablik and regular title-hopefuls KR.

Having landed the first championship in their 60-year history, **Breidablik**, under the guidance of coach Olafur Kristjansson, will be determined to prove that last season's success was more than just a one-off. Their chances of a successful defence could ultimately rest on how well they cope with the loss to Belgian club Lokeren of free-scoring forward Alfred Finnbogason, whose 14 goals saw him share first place in last season's goalscoring charts.

Opening day visitors **KR** – one of five top-flight sides from the capital Reykjavik – finished fourth last season but will still be looking for a considerable improvement, despite reports that eight players have taken a 10 per cent wage cut in a reaction to the parlous state of the Icelandic economy.

Under the steadying influence of coach Runar Kristinsson, and boosted by the incentive of performance-related bonuses, the club are tipped by many to mount its strongest challenge since winning the league in 2003.

Up for it...Breidablik's Finnur Orri Margeirsson (left) in Europa league action

Champions for five of the previous seven seasons, **FH** only lost out to Bredablik last time around on goal-difference and can be expected to be just as strong contenders come October.

IBV, who headed the table for much of last season before eventually slipping down to third, are expected to mount another strong challenge this term and few sides will relish the tricky trip to the Westman Islands.

Fram will be looking to regain the consistency that has eluded them in recent seasons, as will **Valur**, who have already stolen a march on their neighbours by winning the Reykjavik Cup in coach Kristjan Gudmundsson's first full season at the club.

Elsewhere, **Keflavik** will be hoping that last year's mid-table finish will serve as a springboard for further improvement, while **Fylkir** and **Grindavik** will be looking to at least keep themselves free of last year's relegation worries.

And having achieved global media celebrity on YouTube for their quirky goal celebrations last season, **Stjarnan** will now be looking to establish themselves as a credible force.

Of the two promoted sides, first division champions **Vikingur** have found themselves the focus of unaccustomed media attention. Having prepared for a return to the top flight after a three-year absence with several high-profile signings, the club hit the headlines in early March when they sacked coach Leifur Gardarsson for reasons that are yet to be fully explained. He has been replaced by former player Andri Marteinsson, whose coaching career includes successfully leading Haukar to promotion two years ago.

For the other promoted club **Thor**, the kudos of having brought premier division football to the northern town of Akureyri for the first time in eight years will be tempered with the more pressing concern of ensuring that their return is more permanent than that of last year's promoted clubs, who were both relegated.

While Breidablik, FH, IBV and KR will also be looking to bring some pride to the domestic game in Europe, it is the national Under-21 side that will be the main focus of attention this year.

After guiding the nation to the finals of this summer's European Under-21 Championship, coach Eyjolfur Sverrisson has now been given priority over the senior squad in terms of picking players for the finals, scheduled for June 11 to June 25 in Denmark.

What many view as the most promising generation of players the country has ever produced will begin their campaign against Belarus on June 11, followed by Switzerland on June 14 and hosts Denmark four days later.

Rab Christie

Breidablik's chances of retaining their title could depend on how well they cope with the loss of 14-goal Alfred Finnbogason

Young guns...potential Euro glory beckons for Iceland's highly rated under-21 side

Top man...KR coach Runar Kristinsson

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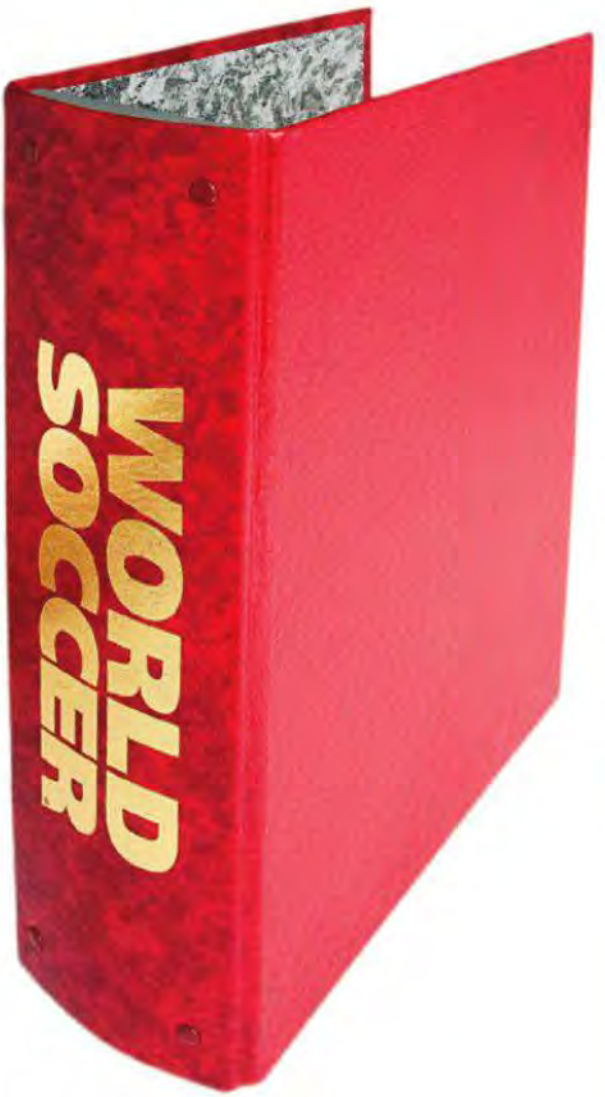

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ANDORRA

Champions again

FC Santa Coloma have retained the Primera Divisio title, winning their sixth championship in total, and will enter next season's Champions League in the first qualifying round. Sant Julia and Lusitanos, who finished second and third respectively, go into the first qualifying round of the Europa League.

At the other end of the table, Benfica are relegated, while Encamp face a two-legged play-off to maintain their top-flight status.

AUSTRIA

Salihi settles derby

A solitary goal from Rapid's Hamdi Salihi settled the 296th edition of the most celebrated Vienna derby and handed table-toppers Austria their first league defeat since November – when they also lost 1-0 to a Salihi goal against Rapid.

BELGIUM

Leaders fight back

Anderlecht twice came from behind against Gent to end the regular season top of the table. Soumahoro Yaya and Bernd Thijs scored for the visitors, but goals from Tom De Sutter (two) and Romelu Lukaku secured the points.

Another winner...Rapid's Salihi

33 goals Lionel Messi has scored for Barcelona in European competition, setting a club record

Club Results

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st knockout round

2nd legs

Mar 8
Barcelona (Spa) 3 (Messi 45+3, pen 71, Xavi 69)
Arsenal (Eng) 1 (Busquets og 53)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 95,486. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Barcelona 4-3 on agg
Barcelona: Valdes - Daniel Alves, Busquets, Abidal, Adriano (Maxwell 90), Mascherano (Keita 88), Xavi, Iniesta, Pedro, Messi, Villa (Afellay 82).
Arsenal: Szczesny (Almunia 19) - Sagna, Djourou, Koscielny, Clichy, Wilshere, Diaby, Fabregas (Bendtner 78), Rosicky (Arshavin 73), Nasri, Van Persie. *Sent off: Van Persie 56min.*

Mar 8
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 3 (Willian 18, 58, Eduardo 87)
Roma (Ita) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 46,543. **Ref:** Webb (Eng)
Shakhtar 6-2 on agg
Shakhtar: Pyatov - Srna, Chygrynskyi, Rakytskyi, Rat, Mkhitaryan (Alex Teixeira 67), Hubschman, Douglas Costa (Eduardo 60), Jadson, Willian, Luiz Adriano (Moreno 75).
Roma: Doni - N Burdisso, Juan, Mexes, Riise, Taddei (Rosi 46), Pizarro, De Rossi, Perrotta (Caprari 86), Vucinic (Brighi 65), Borriello.
Sent off: Mexes 41min.

Mar 9
Schalke (Ger) 3 (Farfan 40, 90+4, Gavranovic 52)
Valencia (Spa) 1 (Ricardo Costa 17)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 53,517. **Ref:** Eriksson (Swe)
Schalke 4-2 on agg
Schalke: Neuer - Uchida, Howedes, Metzelder, Escudero, Matip (Papadopoulos 60), Kluge (Sarpei 81), Farfan, Jurado (Draxler 76), Raul, Gavranovic.
Valencia: Guaita - Bruno, David Navarro, Ricardo Costa, Mathieu, Banega (Tino Costa 71), Mehmet, Joaquin, Mata, Pablo (Soldado 64), Aduriz (Jonas 74).

Mar 9
Tottenham Hotspur (Eng) 0
Milan (Ita) 0
Att: 34,320. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Tottenham 1-0 on agg
Tottenham: Gomes - Corluka, Gallas, Dawson, Assou-Ekotto, Lennon, Sandro, Modric, Pienaar (Jenas 71), Van der Vaart (Bale 66), Crouch (Pavlyuchenko 83).
Milan: Abbiati - Abate, Nesta, Thiago Silva, Jankulovski (Antonini 70), Seedorf, Boateng (Merkel 76), Flamini (Strasser 87), Robinho, Alexandre Pato, Ibrahimovic.

Mar 15
Bayern Munich (Ger) 2 (Gomez 21, Muller 31)
Internazionale (Ita) 3 (Eto'o 3, Sneijder 63, Pandev 88)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 66,000. **Ref:** Proenca (Por)
Agg 3-3. Internazionale on away goals
Bayern: Kraft - Lahm, Van Buyten (Badstuber 70), Breno (Kroos 90), Pranjic, Schweinsteiger, Luiz Gustavo, Robben (Altintop 68), Muller, Ribery, Gomez.
Inter: Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Ranocchia, Chivu (Nagatomo 87), Cambiasso, Thiago Motta, Stankovic (Coutinho 51), Sneijder, Pandev (Kharja 90), Eto'o.

Mar 15
Manchester United (Eng) 2 (Hernandez 5, 75)
Marseille (Fra) 1 (Brown og 82)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 73,996. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Manchester United 2-1 on agg
Man United: Van der Sar - O'Shea (Rafael 37; Fabio 70), Smalling, Brown, Evra, Nani (Valencia 62), Carrick, Scholes, Giggs, Hernandez, Rooney.
Marseille: Mandanda - Fanni, Diawara, Heinze, Taiwo, Mbia (J Ayew 80), Cheyrou, Gonzalez, Remy, A Ayew, Gignac (Valbuena 69).

Mar 16
Chelsea (Eng) 0
Copenhagen (Den) 0
Att: 36,454. **Ref:** Moen (Nor)
Chelsea 2-0 on agg
Chelsea: Cech - Bosingwa, Ivanovic, Terry, Cole, Mikel (Essien 84), Ramires, Zhirkov (Malouda 75), Lampard, Drogba, Anelka (Fernando Torres 68).
Copenhagen: Wiland - Wendt, Jorgensen, Antonsson, Bengtsson (Zohore 61), Bolanos (Kristensen 90), Kvist, Claudemir, Vingaard (Santin 74), Gronkjaer, N'Doye.

Mar 16
Real Madrid (Spa) 3 (Marcelo 37, Benzema 66, Di Maria 76)
Lyon (Fra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 70,034. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
Real Madrid 4-1 on agg
Real Madrid: Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pepe, Ricardo Carvalho, Marcelo, Khedira, Xabi Alonso, Di Maria (Granero 78), Ozil, Cristiano Ronaldo (Adebayor 74), Benzema (L Diarra 84).
Lyon: Lloris - Reveillere, Cris, Lovren, Cissokho, Gourcuff (Pied 69), Toulalan, Kallstrom, Briand (Gomis 46), Lopez, Delgado (Pjanic 80).

Quarter-finals draw

Barcelona v Shakhtar Donetsk**
Chelsea v Manchester United**
Internazionale v Schalke*
Real Madrid v Tottenham Hotspur*
**1st legs - April 5; 2nd legs - April 13*
***1st legs - April 6; 2nd legs - April 12*

Semi-finals draw

Inter OR Schalke v Chelsea OR Man United*
Real Madrid OR Tottenham v Barcelona OR Shakhtar**
**1st leg - April 26; 2nd leg - May 4*
***1st leg - April 27; 2nd leg - May 3*

Final

May 28 - London (Wembley)

EUROPA LEAGUE

2nd knockout round

1st legs - March 10; 2nd legs - March 17
Ajax (Hol) v Spartak Moscow (Rus)
0-1, 0-3 (agg 0-4)
Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) v Villarreal (Spa)
2-3, 1-2 (agg 3-5)
Benfica (Por) v Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
2-1, 1-1 (agg 3-2)
Braga (Por) v Liverpool (Eng)
1-0, 0-0 (agg 1-0)
CSKA Moscow (Rus) v Porto (Por)
0-1, 1-2 (agg 1-3)
Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr) v Manchester City (Eng)
2-0, 0-1 (agg 2-1)
PSV Eindhoven (Hol) v Rangers (Sco)
0-0, 1-0 (agg 1-0)
Twente Enschede (Hol) v Zenit St Petersburg (Rus)
3-0, 0-2 (agg 3-2)

Quarter-finals draw

Benfica v PSV Eindhoven
Dynamo Kyiv v Braga
Porto v Spartak Moscow
Villarreal v Twente Enschede
1st legs - April 7; 2nd legs - April 14

Semi-finals draw

Dynamo Kyiv OR Braga v Benfica OR PSV
Porto OR Spartak Moscow v Villarreal OR Twente
1st legs - April 28; 2nd legs - May 5

Final

May 18 - Dublin (Aviva)

AUSTRIA

Mar 1: Mattersburg 1 Rapid 0.
Mar 2: LASK 2 Wiener Neustadt 3; Austria 2 Sturm 2; Kapfenberger 0 Salzburg 1; Ried 2 Wacker 2.
Mar 5: Salzburg 2 Mattersburg 0; Sturm 1 LASK 1; Wiener Neustadt 1 Kapfenberger 1; Wacker 0 Austria 3.
Mar 6: Rapid 2 Ried 0.
Mar 9: Kapfenberger 0 Wacker 0.
Mar 12: Sturm 1 Wiener Neustadt 0; Ried 2 Salzburg 2; LASK 0 Wacker 1; Mattersburg 1 Kapfenberger 1.
Mar 13: Austria 0 Rapid 1.
Mar 19: Rapid 0 LASK 0; Wacker 1 Sturm 0; Kapfenberger 2 Ried 1; Wiener Neustadt 2 Mattersburg 1.
Mar 20: Salzburg 1 Austria 1.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Austria	26	13	7	6	45	23	46
Sturm	26	13	6	7	45	24	45
Salzburg	26	11	10	5	30	19	43
Ried	26	13	3	10	37	29	42
Rapid	26	11	8	7	37	27	41
W Neustadt	26	12	5	9	34	34	41
Wacker	26	10	8	8	32	28	38
Kapfenberger	26	7	8	11	30	41	29
Mattersburg	26	5	5	16	20	43	20
LASK	26	2	6	18	17	59	12

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated

BELGIUM

Regular season

Mar 4: Anderlecht 1 Genk 1.
Mar 5: Cercle Brugge 0 Westerlo 1; Mechelen 1 Gent 1; St Truiden 1 Germinal Beerschot 0; Lokeren 2 Zulte Waregem 1; Kortrijk 3 Charleroi 0.
Mar 6: Standard 2 Club Brugge 2; Lierse 1 Eupen 1.
Mar 12: Club Brugge 4 Kortrijk 1; Gent 1 Cercle Brugge 0; Charleroi 0 Standard 2; Genk 0 Westerlo 2; Germinal Beerschot 1 Mechelen 1; Zulte Waregem 1 St Truiden 2; Lokeren 1 Lierse 1; Eupen 1 Anderlecht 1.
Mar 19: Kortrijk 2 Zulte Waregem 2.
Mar 20: Anderlecht 3 Gent 2; Standard 1 Germinal Beerschot 0; St Truiden 0 Lokeren 2; Mechelen 2 Eupen 0; Lierse 0 Club Brugge 0; Westerlo 2 Charleroi 2; Cercle Brugge 0 Genk 1.
Mar 23: Charleroi 0 Cercle Brugge 3 (originally awarded 5-0 to Cercle Brugge but then game was ordered to be played).

BELGIUM – REGULAR – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	30	19	8	3	58	20	65
Genk	30	19	7	4	64	27	64
Gent	30	17	6	7	59	42	57
Club Brugge	30	16	5	9	60	35	53
Lokeren	30	13	11	6	43	36	50
Standard	30	15	4	11	50	38	49
Mechelen	30	13	9	8	34	30	48
Westerlo	30	11	8	11	41	40	41
Cercle Brugge	30	11	6	13	33	34	39
Kortrijk	30	11	5	14	36	39	38
Z Waregem	30	7	12	11	39	41	33
St Truiden	30	8	5	17	20	51	29
Germinal B	30	5	11	14	24	40	26
Lierse	30	4	12	14	26	58	24
Eupen	30	5	8	17	28	50	23
Charleroi	30	4	7	19	20	54	19

Top 6 enter championship play-offs; 7th to 14th enter Europa League place play-offs; bottom 2 (15th & 16th places) enter rel/prom play-offs (1 of them will definitely go down)

BULGARIA

Mar 5: Vidima-Rakovski 0 Akademik 1; Sliven 1 Pirin 0; Slavia 1 Minyor 2; Montana 3 Kaliakra 2; Chernomorets 0 CSKA 4.
Mar 6: Cherno More 1 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 1; Lokomotiv Sofia 0 Levski 2.
Mar 7: Lovech 4 Beroe 0.
Mar 12: Akademik 0 Cherno More 0; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 3 Sliven 0; Pirin 1 Lovech 2; Minyor 1 Montana 0; Levski 1 Chernomorets 0.
Mar 13: Beroe 2 Slavia 1; CSKA 1 Vidima-Rakovski 0.
Mar 14: Kaliakra 0 Lokomotiv Sofia 1.
Mar 19: Montana 2 Beroe 1; Slavia 1 Pirin 1; Sliven 3 Akademik 0; Vidima-Rakovski 3 Chernomorets 0.
Mar 20: Cherno More 1 CSKA 0; Lovech 1 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 0.
Mar 21: Lokomotiv Sofia 0 Minyor 3.

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DENMARK

Beaten at last

Having gone through the first half of the season unbeaten in the league, Copenhagen suffered their first defeat of the campaign when they went down 2-0 away to Midtjylland as the Superliga restarted after the winter break. Jakob Poulsen and Mikkel Thygesen were on target for the home side.

Copenhagen returned to winning ways in their next two league outings and now lead the table by a massive 21 points.

ENGLAND

Reds' late show

After two successive defeats, a late Dimitar Berbatov goal gave 10-man Manchester United victory over Bolton Wanderers and kept them five points clear of Arsenal at the top of the Premier League.

United – who had lost their two previous games, at Chelsea and Liverpool – had Jonny Evans sent off for a reckless second-half challenge. Meanwhile, Ryan Giggs set a new club record when he made his 607th league appearance in the

Decisive strike...Berbatov

28 consecutive games in which West Bromwich Albion have failed to keep a clean sheet, creating a new Premier League record

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lovech	19	15	4	0	35	9	49
Levski	18	12	2	4	36	18	38
CSKA	19	10	5	4	30	17	35
Lok Sofia	19	11	1	7	34	23	34
Lok Plovdiv	19	9	6	4	34	16	33
Cherno More	19	9	3	7	20	22	30
Beroe	19	8	5	6	19	22	29
Chernomorets	19	7	8	4	13	16	29
Slavia	19	8	3	8	29	25	27
Montana	19	6	4	9	22	27	22
Minyor	19	6	3	10	24	34	21
Akademik	19	4	5	10	12	25	17
Sliven	19	4	4	11	16	26	16
Kaliakra	18	4	4	10	11	24	16
Pirin	19	2	6	11	12	26	12
V-Rakovski	19	3	3	13	15	32	12

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

CROATIA

Mar 1: Cibalia 0 Zadar 0.
Mar 4: Inter 0 Zagreb 2; Hrvatski Dragovoljac 3 Varazdin 2.
Mar 5: Osijek 2 Istra 1; Sibenik 0 Lokomotiva 0; Zadar 0 Hajduk 2; Split 2 Cibalia 1; Rijeka 0 Karlovac 0; Dinamo 0 Slaven 0.
Mar 11: Lokomotiva 2 Inter 4; Zagreb 1 Zadar 0.
Mar 12: Osijek 0 Hrvatski Dragovoljac 0; Istra 1 Sibenik 4; Slaven 0 Rijeka 1; Cibalia 0 Dinamo 1; Karlovac 1 Varazdin 0; Hajduk 3 Split 1.
Mar 18: Hrvatski Dragovoljac 1 Karlovac 0; Inter 3 Istra 1.
Mar 19: Split 2 Zagreb 0; Zadar 1 Lokomotiva 0; Sibenik 2 Osijek 1; Varazdin 1 Slaven 1; Rijeka 0 Cibalia 0; Dinamo 2 Hajduk 0.

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	22	17	4	1	44	9	55
Hajduk	22	14	5	3	44	18	47
Split	22	11	3	8	28	18	36
Inter	22	10	5	7	24	22	35
Cibalia	22	9	5	8	25	17	32
Karlovac	22	9	3	10	18	18	30
Rijeka	22	8	6	8	23	29	30
Varazdin	22	7	8	7	22	26	29
Zagreb	22	8	4	10	20	24	28
Osijek	22	6	9	7	23	23	27
Zadar	22	8	3	11	24	27	27
Sibenik	22	6	8	8	28	28	26
Slaven	22	6	8	8	20	22	26
Lokomotiva	22	6	5	11	19	32	23
Istra	22	5	3	14	17	37	18
H Dragovoljac	22	4	5	13	16	45	17

30-round season (15x2); bottom 5 will be relegated

CYPRUS

Regular season
Jan 28: Ermis 3 Anorthosis 0 (awarded).
Mar 5: Ethnikos 1 Ermis 0; Alki 3 AEL 0; AEK 0 ENP 2; Apollon 1 Anorthosis 2.
Mar 6: Doxa 0 APOEL 1; Omonia 1 AEP 1; APOP 1 Olympiakos 3.
Mar 12: Olympiakos 1 APOEL 2.
Mar 13: ENP 1 Ethnikos 2; AEP 1 Apollon 0; Ermis 3 Alki 1; AEL 2 APOP 0; Omonia 6 Doxa 0; Anorthosis 2 AEK 1.
Mar 19: APOP 1 Ermis 3; Ethnikos 0 Anorthosis 2; AEK 2 AEP 1; Apollon 2 Omonia 0; APOEL 2 AEL 0; Doxa 1 Olympiakos 2; Alki 0 ENP 3.

CYPRUS – REGULAR – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
APOEL	26	20	2	4	55	19	62
Omonia	26	14	8	4	38	16	50
Anorthosis	26	13	6	7	46	31	45
AEK	26	12	6	8	36	30	42
Apollon	26	11	5	10	40	37	38
Olympiakos	26	9	9	8	41	41	36
ENP	26	10	6	10	26	25	36
AEL	26	8	9	9	28	35	33
Ethnikos	26	8	9	9	25	27	33
Ermis	26	7	9	10	31	38	30
Alki	26	8	5	13	30	40	29
AEP	26	6	8	12	33	37	26
Doxa (R)	26	5	5	16	25	55	20
APOP (R)	26	4	7	15	24	47	19

Top 4 enter championship play-offs; 5th to 8th enter "placement" play-offs; 9th to 12th enter relegation play-offs (1 of them will be relegated); bottom 2 (13th & 14th places) relegated automatically

CZECH REPUBLIC

Mar 4: Bohemians 1905 0 Jablonec 1.
Mar 5: Liberec 0 Slavia 2; Slovacko 2 Plzen 2.
Mar 6: Hradec Kralove 2 Ceske Budejovice 0; Mlada Boleslav 5 Brno 0; Sparta 1 Pribram 0; Teplice 2 Usti nad Labem 1.
Mar 7: Olomouc 2 Ostrava 0.
Mar 11: Brno 2 Olomouc 0.
Mar 12: Pribram 1 Liberec 0; Plzen 1 Sparta 0.
Mar 13: Jablonec 7 Hradec Kralove 0; Ceske Budejovice 1 Bohemians 1905 1; Usti nad Labem 2 Slovacko 0; Slavia 4 Teplice 1.
Mar 14: Ostrava 1 Mlada Boleslav 0.
Mar 18: Plzen 2 Ceske Budejovice 1.
Mar 19: Slovacko 1 Jablonec 1; Liberec 4 Mlada Boleslav 0; Sparta 2 Brno 0.
Mar 20: Bohemians 1905 1 Usti nad Labem 0; Olomouc 0 Slavia 0; Teplice 4 Ostrava 0.
Mar 21: Hradec Kralove 2 Pribram 1.

CZECH REPUBLIC

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Plzen	21	16	3	2	50	20	51
Sparta	21	15	1	5	34	12	46
Jablonec	21	12	4	5	43	20	40
Olomouc	21	11	5	5	39	16	38
M Boleslav	21	9	7	5	36	26	34
Teplice	21	9	5	7	31	30	32
Boh'ians 1905	21	8	5	8	24	23	29
Liberec	21	7	5	9	28	27	26
Slavia	21	5	9	7	25	27	24
H Kralove	21	6	6	9	17	29	24
Pribram	21	5	7	9	13	22	22
Ostrava	21	6	4	11	20	31	22
Slovacko	21	6	4	11	21	35	22
C Budejovice	21	4	8	9	17	35	20
Brno	21	6	1	14	25	43	19
Usti	21	3	6	12	16	43	15

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

DENMARK

Mar 5: AaB 1 Silkeborg 1.
Mar 6: Esbjerg 0 SonderjyskE 1; Brondby 1 Lyngby 1; Randers 4 Nordsjaelland 0; Midtjylland 2 Copenhagen 0.
Mar 7: Horsens 2 OB 1.
Mar 12: Midtjylland 2 Nordsjaelland 2; AaB 0 Copenhagen 1.
Mar 13: Esbjerg 1 Randers 3; Brondby 2 SonderjyskE 0; Silkeborg 2 Horsens 1.
Mar 14: OB 2 Lyngby 0.
Mar 19: Silkeborg 1 OB 1.
Mar 20: Horsens 0 Randers 0; Nordsjaelland 1 Esbjerg 2; Lyngby 1 AaB 2; Copenhagen 3 Brondby 1.
Mar 21: SonderjyskE 2 Midtjylland 1.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Copenhagen	22	18	3	1	54	18	57
OB	22	11	3	8	40	31	36
Brondby	22	9	7	6	35	30	34
Midtjylland	21	9	6	6	36	25	33
SonderjyskE	22	8	4	10	25	31	28
Horsens	22	8	4	10	20	29	28
Silkeborg	22	6	9	7	28	34	27
Randers	22	5	11	6	29	26	26
Lyngby	21	6	6	9	28	36	24
Nordsjaelland	22	6	5	11	24	36	23
Esbjerg	22	4	8	10	25	36	20
AaB	22	4	8	10	21	33	20

33-round season (11x3); bottom 2 will be relegated

ENGLAND

Tuesday, March 1
Chelsea 2 (David Luiz 53, Lampard pen 78)
Manchester United 1 (Rooney 28) Att: 41,825

Saturday, March 5
Arsenal 0
Sunderland 0 Att: 60,081

Birmingham 1 (Beausejour 48)
West Bromwich 3 (Mulumbu 47, Morrison 58, Scharner 71) Att: 27,013

Bolton 3 (Cahill 45, 75, Klasnic 85)
Aston Villa 2 (Bent 14, Albrighton 63) Att: 22,533

Fulham 3 (Duff 37, 59, Zamora pen 88)
Blackburn 2 (Hanley 45, Hoilett 64) Att: 25,687

Manchester City 1 (Silva 37)
Wigan 0 Att: 44,864

Newcastle 1 (Best 23)
Everton 2 (Osman 30, Jagielka 36) Att: 50,128

West Ham 3 (Ba 21, Da Costa 28, Hitzlsperger 83)
Stoke 0 Att: 33,066

Sunday, March 6
Liverpool 3 (Kuyt 34, 38, 65)
Manchester United 1 (Hernandez 90) Att: 44,753

Wolverhampton 3 (Doyle 20, pen 39, Fletcher 86)
Tottenham 3 (Defoe 29, 35, Pavlyuchenko 47)
Att: 28,669

Monday, March 7
Blackpool 1 (Puncheon 86)
Chelsea 3 (Terry 19, Lampard pen 63, 66)
Att: 15,584

Wednesday, March 9
Everton 1 (Heitinga 34)
Birmingham 1 (Beausejour 16) Att: 33,974

Saturday, March 19
Aston Villa 0
Wolverhampton 1 (Jarvis 38) Att: 38,965

Blackburn 2 (Samba 49, Hoilett 90)
Blackpool 2 (Adam pen 24, 28) Att: 27,209

Everton 2 (Coleman 36, Saha 48)
Fulham 1 (Dempsey 62) Att: 33,239

Manchester United 1 (Berbatov 88)
Bolton 0 Att: 75,486

Stoke 4 (Walters 27, Pennant 46, Higginbotham 48, Fuller 90)
Newcastle 0 Att: 27,505

Tottenham 0
West Ham 0 Att: 36,010

West Bromwich 2 (Reid 2, Odemwingie 57)
Arsenal 2 (Arshavin 69, Van Persie 77) Att: 25,729

Wigan 2 (Cleverley 24, Figueroa 90)
Birmingham 1 (Ridgewell 5) Att: 16,421

Sunday, March 20
Chelsea 2 (David Luiz 77, Ramires 90)
Manchester City 0 Att: 41,741

Sunderland 0
Liverpool 2 (Kuyt pen 32, Suarez 77) Att: 47,207

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man United	30	18	9	3	64	30	63
Arsenal	29	17	7	5	59	29	58
Chelsea	29	16	6	7	53	24	54
Man City	30	15	8	7	45	27	53
Tottenham	29	13	10	6	41	34	49
Liverpool	30	13	6	11	41	36	45
Bolton	30	10	10	10	42	41	40
Everton	30	9	13	8	40	39	40
Sunderland	30	9	11	10	33	37	38
Stoke	30	11	4	15	36	38	37
Newcastle	30	9	9	12	44	45	36
Fulham	30	7	14	9	33	33	35
Blackburn	30	9	6	15	39	51	33
Aston Villa	30	8	9	13	37	51	33
Blackpool	30	9	6	15	45	60	33
West Brom	30	8	9	13	41	56	33
West Ham	30	7	11	12	36	49	32
Wolves	30	9	5	16	35	49	32
Birmingham	29	6	13	10	28	41	31
Wigan	30	6	12	12	29	51	30

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS

20	Dimitar Berbatov (Manchester United)
18	Carlos Tevez (Manchester City)
11	Darren Bent (Sunderland/Aston Villa)
11	Andy Carroll (Newcastle/Liverpool)
11	Kevin Nolan (Newcastle)
11	Robin Van Persie (Arsenal)

FA CUP

Last 16
Mar 1: Everton 0 Reading 1.
Mar 2: Manchester City 3 Aston Villa 0.

Replay
Mar 2: Arsenal 5 Leyton Orient 0.

Quarter-finals
Mar 12: Birmingham 2 Bolton 3; Manchester United 2 Arsenal 0.
Mar 13: Manchester City 1 Reading 0; Stoke 2 West Ham 1.

Semi-finals draw
Bolton v Stoke (Apr 17)
Manchester City v Manchester United (Apr 16)

3-1 defeat at Liverpool. The 37-year-old winger has now completed 20 years as a first-team player at Old Trafford.

Birmingham City midfielder Lee Bowyer made it into the record books with his caution in the side's 3-1 defeat at home to West Bromwich Albion. He became the first player to collect 100 bookings in the Premier League. The result saw City drop into the relegation zone six days after winning the League Cup and qualifying for Europe.

ESTONIA

Flora fired up

Flora beat Levadia on penalties to win this year's Super Cup and are one of four sides – along with Trans, Sillamae Kalev and Levadia – who are still unbeaten and joint top of the table after the first four games of the new season.

FRANCE

Lille still lead the way

Moussa Sow's 19th goal of the season enabled league leaders Lille to come from behind away to Brest and seal a third successive 2-1 victory.

Handful...Brest (in white) are at full stretch trying to cope with Sow

FRANCE

Saturday, March 5

Auxerre 1 (Chafni 86)
Paris Saint-Germain 0 Att: 12,045

Caen 1 (El Arabi 90+2)
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 17,163

Lorient 0
Nancy 0 Att: 16,064

Montpellier 0
Rennes 1 (Boukari 26) Att: 15,165

Nice 0
Lens 0 Att: 8,235

Toulouse 0
Sochaux 1 (Maiga 64) Att: 14,126

Valenciennes 0
Monaco 0 Att: 11,859

Sunday, March 6

Brest 1 (Ferradj 86)
Bordeaux 3 (Wendel 48, Plasil 67, Diabate 90+2) Att: 14,034

Lyon 5 (Lopez 13, 50, 54, Pjanic 16, Michel Bastos 90+2)
Arles-Avignon 0 Att: 36,000

Marseille 1 (Remy 59)
Lille 2 (Hazard 9, Frau 90+1) Att: 52,960

Friday, March 11

Rennes 0
Marseille 2 (Remy 22, Gonzalez 80) Att: 29,002

Saturday, March 12

Arles-Avignon 3 (Meriem 6, Kermorgant 64, Cabella 80)
Lorient 3 (Amalfitano 18, Diarra 44, Gameiro 53) Att: 7,397

Lens 0
Toulouse 1 (Santander 74) Att: 29,483

Nancy 2 (N'Guemo 38, Traore 85)
Caen 0 Att: 16,247

Nice 1 (Mouloungui 61)
Auxerre 0 Att: 7,582

Saint-Etienne 2 (Sako pen 35, Payet 87)
Brest 0 Att: 20,706

Sochaux 0
Lyon 2 (Lopez 22, Pjanic 64) Att: 17,879

Sunday, March 13

Bordeaux 0
Monaco 1 (Adriano 22) Att: 26,689

Lille 2 (Sow 38, Hazard 90+2)
Valenciennes 1 (Pujol 59) Att: 17,083

Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Hoarau 10, Yangambiwa og 12)
Montpellier 2 (Giroud 47, 59) Att: 23,605

Saturday, March 19

Auxerre 2 (Jelen 17, 63)
Sochaux 0 Att: 16,213

Brest 1 (Lesoimier 18)
Lille 2 (Gervinho 39, Sow 53) Att: 13,354

Lorient 0
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 16,045

Lyon 1 (Gomis 35)
Rennes 1 (Theophile-Catherine 87) Att: 35,504

Montpellier 1 (Bocaly 56)
Lens 4 (Akale 19, Marveaux og 29, Roudet 33, Jemaa 62) Att: 14,579

Toulouse 1 (Santander 26)
Nice 1 (Cetto og 90+4) Att: 12,356

Valenciennes 2 (Danic 35, 59)
Bordeaux 2 (Jussie 80, Ciani 83) Att: 11,072

Sunday, March 20

Caen 2 (Mollo 79, El Arabi 84)
Arles-Avignon 0 Att: 14,717

Marseille 2 (Heinze 15, A Ayew 35)
Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Chantome 26) Att: 52,792

Monaco 0
Nancy 1 (Andre Luiz 18) Att: 5,546

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lille	28	15	10	3	49	27	55
Marseille	28	14	9	5	41	24	51
Rennes	28	14	8	6	32	21	50
Lyon	28	13	10	5	47	26	49
PSG	28	12	9	7	42	30	45
Saint-Etienne	28	10	9	9	35	33	39
Montpellier	28	10	9	9	24	30	39
Bordeaux	28	9	11	8	37	34	38
Lorient	28	10	8	10	35	34	38
Toulouse	28	11	4	13	29	30	37
Sochaux	28	10	5	13	40	35	35
Brest	28	9	8	11	28	32	35
Caen	28	9	8	11	31	38	35
Nancy	28	10	5	13	30	41	35
Nice	28	8	10	10	19	28	34
Valenciennes	28	7	12	9	33	31	33
Auxerre	28	6	14	8	32	34	32
Monaco	28	5	14	9	26	29	29
Lens	28	6	10	12	28	42	28
Arles-Avignon	28	1	9	18	16	55	12

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS

19 Moussa Sow (Lille)
16 Kevin Gameiro (Lorient)
14 Youssef El Arabi (Caen)
13 Nene (Paris Saint-Germain)
12 Gervinho (Lille)
12 Lisandro Lopez (Lyon)

FRENCH CUP

Quarter-finals

Mar 1: Reims 2 Nice 3 (aet).
Mar 2: Chambery 0 Angers 3; Lille 0 Lorient 0 (aet; Lille 5-3 on pens); Paris Saint-Germain 2 Le Mans 0 (aet).

Semi-finals draw

Angers v Paris Saint-Germain (Apr 20)
Nice v Lille (Apr 20)

GERMANY

Friday, March 4

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Lewandowski 43)
Koln 0 Att: 80,720

Saturday, March 5

Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Bender 20, Renato Augusto 29, Kiessling 45+1)
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 28,115

Eintracht Frankfurt 0
Kaiserslautern 0 Att: 49,400

Hannover 3 (Abdellaoue 15, Rausch 50, Pinto 61)
Bayern Munich 1 (Robben 55) Att: 49,000

Monchengladbach 2 (Daems pen 64, De Camargo 69)
1899 Hoffenheim 0 Att: 35,350

Nurnberg 5 (Wollscheid 3, Eigler 13, 17, 85, 86)
St Pauli 0 Att: 45,109

Stuttgart 1 (Kuzmanovic pen 15)
Schalke 0 Att: 39,000

Sunday, March 6

Freiburg 1 (Cisse pen 49)
Werder Bremen 3 (Wagner 11, Pizarro 76, Marin 90+2) Att: 24,000

Hamburg 2 (Jansen 16, Petric 59)
Mainz 4 (Schurrle 55, 82, Risse 61, Heller 88) Att: 49,462

Friday, March 11

Koln 4 (Petit 36, Podolski 59, Novakovic 79, 88)
Hannover 0 Att: 46,500

Saturday, March 12

Bayern Munich 6 (Robben 39, 47, 54, Ribery 64, Muller 79, Westermann og 85)
Hamburg 0 Att: 69,000

1899 Hoffenheim 1 (Ibisevic 62)
Borussia Dortmund 0 Att: 30,150

UP TO AND INCLUDING MARCH 20 GAMES

POS		TEAM	GOALS	FACTOR	PTS
1	Cristiano Ronaldo	Real Madrid (Spa)	27	2	54
	Lionel Messi	Barcelona (Spa)	27	2	54
3	Antonio Di Natale	Udinese (Ita)	25	2	50
4	Edinson Cavani	Napoli (Ita)	22	2	44
5	Dimitar Berbatov	Manchester United (Eng)	20	2	40
6	Samuel Eto'o	Internazionale (Ita)	19	2	38
	Mario Gomez	Bayern Munich (Ger)	19	2	38
	Moussa Sow	Lille (Fra)	19	2	38
9	Kenny Miller	Rangers (Sco)/Bursaspor (Tur)	25	1.5	37.5
10	Papiss Demba Cisse	Freiburg (Ger)	18	2	36
	Marco Di Vaio	Bologna (Ita)	18	2	36
	Carlos Tevez	Manchester City (Eng)	18	2	36
13	David Villa	Barcelona (Spa)	17	2	34
14	Kevin Gameiro	Lorient (Fra)	16	2	32
	Theofanis Gekas	Eintracht Frankfurt (Ger)	16	2	32
	Alessandro Matri	Cagliari (Ita)/Juventus (Ita)	16	2	32
17	Hulk	Porto (Por)	21	1.5	31.5
18	Fernando Llorente	Athletic Bilbao (Spa)	15	2	30
	Giuseppe Rossi	Villarreal (Spa)	15	2	30
20	Alex de Souza	Fenerbahce (Tur)	19	1.5	28.5
	Djibril Cisse	Panathinaikos (Gre)	19	1.5	28.5
	Welliton Soares	Spartak Moscow (Rus) (2010)	19	1.5	28.5
23	Youssef El Arabi	Caen (Fra)	14	2	28
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	Milan (Ita)	14	2	28
25	Bjorn Vleminckx	NEC Nijmegen (Hol)	18	1.5	27

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ITALY

Cavani saves the day

Robert Aquafresca's goal for Cagliari was the first conceded at home by Napoli keeper Morgan De Sanctis for a new club record 799 minutes. However, a brace from Edinson Cavani maintained Napoli's 11-game unbeaten run at the San Paolo as he equalled a club record with his 22nd goal in a single Serie A campaign.

KAZAKHSTAN

More success for Fach

German coach Holger Fach's Lokomotiv Astana added the Kazakh Super Cup to the Kazakh Cup they won last year by beating the reigning league champions Tobol 2-1 ahead of the new season.

NORWAY

Solskjaer struggles

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's managerial career got off to a poor start when his Molde side were beaten 3-0 by Sarpsborg on the opening day of the season.

"They got two quick goals at the start of the second half and we fell apart," said Solskjaer. However, Molde's defeat was not the worst on the opening day as Stabaek conceded seven goals at home to Lillestrom.

PORTUGAL

Run comes to an end

Benfica, who extended their Portuguese record of 18 consecutive wins in all competitions with a 2-1

330 **Bundesliga appearances Hamburg's Brazilian midfielder Ze Roberto has made – equalling the record for a non-German**

Kaiserslautern 2 (Nemec 34, Hoffer 90+2)
Freiburg 1 (Nemec og 21) Att: 41,015

Schalke 2 (Jurado pen 45+1, Charisteas 84)
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Tzavellas 69) Att: 61,673

Werder Bremen 1 (Wagner 38)
Monchengladbach 1 (Dante 90+2) Att: 40,500

Wolfsburg 1 (Mandzukic 22)
Nurnberg 2 (Wollscheid 45+1, Nilsson 90+2)
Att: 27,316

Sunday, March 13
Mainz 0
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Renato Augusto 81)
Att: 20,300

St Pauli 1 (Boll 19)
Stuttgart 2 (Kuzmanovic 24, Schipplock 87)
Att: 24,487

Friday, March 18
Monchengladbach 0
Kaiserslautern 1 (Bailly og 61) Att: 47,696

Saturday, March 19
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Hummels 7)
Mainz 1 (Sliskovic 89) Att: 80,720

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Gekas pen 33, 77)
St Pauli 1 (Takyi 41) Att: 50,500

Freiburg 1 (Cisse 17)
Bayern Munich 2 (Gomez 9, Ribery 88) Att: 24,000

Hamburg 6 (Petric 12, 37, 42, Ben Hatira 32, Kacar 52, Ze Roberto pen 58)
Koln 2 (Jajalo 49, Podolski 61) Att: 57,000

Hannover 2 (Ya Konan 38, Abdellaoue 52)
1899 Hoffenheim 0 Att: 47,200

Nurnberg 1 (Gundogan 30)
Werder Bremen 3 (Wagner pen 27, pen 88, Pizarro 49) Att: 48,548

Sunday, March 20
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Derdiyok 18, Metzelder og 26)
Schalke 0 Att: 30,210

Stuttgart 1 (Niedermeier 90+4)
Wolfsburg 1 (Grafite 39) Att: 38,500

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B Dortmund	27	19	5	3	54	16	62
B Leverkusen	27	16	7	4	56	34	55
Hannover	27	16	2	9	39	36	50
Bayern	27	14	6	7	59	34	48
Mainz	27	14	2	11	42	34	44
Nurnberg	27	12	6	9	42	36	42
Hamburg	27	12	4	11	43	44	40
Freiburg	27	11	4	12	34	38	37
Hoffenheim	27	9	9	9	42	39	36
Schalke	27	9	6	12	31	33	33
Koln	27	9	5	13	37	49	32
Werder	27	8	8	11	37	53	32
Kaiserslautern	27	8	7	12	36	43	31
E Frankfurt	27	9	4	14	27	37	31
Stuttgart	27	8	5	14	46	49	29
St Pauli	27	8	4	15	29	47	28
Wolfsburg	27	6	9	12	31	40	27
M'gladbach	27	6	5	16	38	61	23

34-round season (17x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

LEADING GOALSCORERS

19	Mario Gomez (Bayern Munich)
18	Papiss Demba Cisse (Freiburg)
16	Theofanis Gekas (Eintracht Frankfurt)
12	Lukas Podolski (Koln)
12	Andre Schurrle (Mainz)
12	Didier Ya Konan (Hannover)

GERMAN CUP

Semi-finals
Mar 1: Duisburg 2 Energie Cottbus 1.
Mar 2: Bayern Munich 0 Schalke 1.

Final
May 21 - Berlin (Olympic)

GREECE

Mar 5: Volos 3 Panserraikos 0; Xanthi 2 Kerkyra 1; Aris 0 Iraklis 1.
Mar 6: Kavala 1 Asteras 0; Olympiakos 3 Ergotelis 0; Larissa 2 Panathinaikos 0; Atromitos 1 Panionios 2; AEK 4 PAOK 0.
Mar 9: PAOK 2 Ergotelis 0.
Mar 12: Asteras 2 Volos 1; Panserraikos 2 Xanthi 1; Iraklis 1 Panathinaikos 3.
Mar 13: Ergotelis 1 Atromitos 1; Panionios 3 Larissa 3; AEK 1 Kavala 0; Kerkyra 3 Aris 4; PAOK 2 Olympiakos 1.
Mar 20: Kavala 0 Volos 1; Olympiakos 6 AEK 0; Xanthi 1 Asteras 0; Atromitos 2 PAOK 2; Aris 3 Panserraikos 1; Larissa 3 Ergotelis 3; Panathinaikos 2 Kerkyra 1; Iraklis 1 Panionios 1.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	27	22	1	4	55	14	67
Panathinaikos	27	17	6	4	44	22	57
AEK	27	13	4	10	42	35	43
PAOK	27	12	5	10	29	29	41
Volos	27	10	11	6	33	24	41
Kavala	27	10	8	9	27	23	38
Aris	27	10	6	11	23	26	36
Xanthi	27	9	8	10	27	29	35
Ergotelis	27	9	6	12	27	37	33
Iraklis	27	7	12	8	22	27	33
Panionios	27	7	10	10	22	31	31
Atromitos	27	6	12	9	27	32	30
Kerkyra	27	8	6	13	28	36	30
Asteras	27	6	10	11	17	25	28
Larissa	27	5	10	12	27	37	25
Panserraikos	27	5	5	17	21	44	20

30-round season (15x2); bottom 3 will be relegated; teams finishing 2nd to 5th will enter play-offs for Greece's 2nd Champions League place

HOLLAND

Mar 4: De Graafschap 2 Willem II 1.
Mar 5: Twente 2 NAC 0; Den Haag 5 NEC 1; Vitesse 2 VVV 0; Excelsior 2 PSV 3.
Mar 6: Heerenveen 0 Feyenoord 1; Groningen 1 Heracles 4; Utrecht 1 Roda JC 1; Ajax 4 AZ 0.
Mar 11: Utrecht 1 Groningen 0.
Mar 12: Heracles 4 Excelsior 1; Roda JC 1 AZ 2; Vitesse 1 Heerenveen 1.
Mar 13: De Graafschap 1 Den Haag 0; Twente 2 VVV 1; Feyenoord 2 NAC 1; Willem II 1 Ajax 3; NEC 2 PSV 2.
Mar 18: AZ 3 Vitesse 1.
Mar 19: NAC 0 Groningen 1; VVV 0 Willem II 0; Heracles 4 Heerenveen 2; NEC 1 De Graafschap 0.
Mar 20: Den Haag 3 Ajax 2; PSV 1 Utrecht 0; Roda JC 3 Feyenoord 0; Excelsior 0 Twente 2.

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	28	18	7	3	72	26	61
Twente	28	18	6	4	54	28	60
Ajax	28	16	7	5	56	26	55
AZ	28	14	7	7	43	34	49
Den Haag	28	14	6	8	55	41	48
Groningen	28	14	5	9	54	43	47
Roda JC	28	11	11	6	49	37	44
Utrecht	28	11	8	9	43	35	41
Heracles	28	10	7	11	52	48	37
NEC	28	8	12	8	44	47	36
Heerenveen	28	9	8	11	50	45	35
Feyenoord	28	9	7	12	37	47	34
NAC*	28	10	4	14	36	49	33
De Graafschap	28	8	9	11	27	45	33
Vitesse	28	7	8	13	34	48	29
Excelsior	28	6	4	18	32	57	22
VVV	28	5	2	21	24	59	17
Willem II	28	2	6	20	28	75	12

34-round season (17x2); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd & 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs
**1pt deducted for financial mismanagement*

DUTCH CUP

Semi-finals
Mar 2: Twente 1 Utrecht 0.
Mar 3: Ajax 5 RKC Waalwijk 1.

Final
May 8 - Rotterdam (De Kuip)

ISRAEL

Regular season
Mar 5: Be'er Sheva 0 Hapoel Haifa 2; Ashdod 1 Bnei Yehuda 2; Bnei Sakhnin 1 Hapoel Petah Tikva 1; Maccabi Petah Tikva 4 Ashkelon 0; Netanya 1 Kiryat Shmona 1; Maccabi Tel Aviv 2 Acre 2.
Mar 6: Maccabi Haifa 3 Ramat Gan 2.
Mar 7: Beitar 1 Hapoel Tel Aviv 0.
Mar 12: H Tel Aviv 1 B Sakhnin 0; Ramat Gan 0 Beitar 0; Acre 1 M Petah Tikva 1; Ashkelon 3 Be'er Sheva 4; H Petah Tikva 3 Ashdod 1; K Shmona 4 M Tel Aviv 0.
Mar 13: Bnei Yehuda 1 Netanya 1.
Mar 14: Hapoel Haifa 0 Maccabi Haifa 2.
Mar 19: Maccabi Haifa 3 Ashkelon 0; Maccabi Petah Tikva 0 Kiryat Shmona 0; Beitar 1 Hapoel Haifa 0; Maccabi Tel Aviv 0 Netanya 3; Be'er Sheva 0 Acre 2.
Mar 20: Hapoel Petah Tikva 2 Bnei Yehuda 1; Ashdod 3 Hapoel Tel Aviv 3.
Mar 21: Bnei Sakhnin 0 Ramat Gan 0.

ISRAEL – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
M Haifa	27	19	6	2	49	22	63
H Tel Aviv	27	18	5	4	61	25	59
M Tel Aviv	27	15	4	8	39	27	49
Kiryat Shmona	27	12	9	6	47	30	45
M Petah Tikva	27	11	7	9	46	33	40
Acre	27	10	10	7	43	34	40
Netanya	27	10	9	8	34	29	39
Bnei Yehuda	27	10	9	8	28	27	39
H Haifa	27	10	7	10	31	34	37
Be'er Sheva	27	9	8	10	33	35	35
Beitar*	27	8	8	11	26	30	31
H Petah Tikva	27	8	6	13	32	46	30
Ashdod	27	7	8	12	33	47	29
Bnei Sakhnin	27	5	6	16	16	36	21
Ashkelon	27	5	5	17	23	52	20
Ramat Gan**	27	1	9	17	16	50	8

30-round regular season (15x2); top 6 will enter championship play-offs; 7th to 10th will enter "placement" play-offs; bottom 6 will enter relegation play-offs (2 of them will go down)
**1pt deducted for fans' racist chants*
***4pts deducted for contract irregularities*

ITALY

Friday, March 4
Lecce 1 (Giacomazzi 75)
Roma 2 (Vucinic 32, Pizarro pen 90) Att: 10,448

Saturday, March 5
Juventus 0
Milan 1 (Gattuso 68) Att: 24,908

Sunday, March 6
Bologna 2 (Di Vaio pen 28, Ramirez 90+4)
Cagliari 2 (Cossu 59, Ragatzu 82) Att: 25,134

Chievo 0
Parma 0 Att: 10,536

Fiorentina 3 (Mutu 20, 23, Gilardino 61)
Catania 0 Att: 20,813

Internazionale 5 (Pazzini 50, Eto'o 51, 57, Pandev 71, Nagatomo 84)
Genoa 2 (Palacio 40, Boselli 90+1) Att: 56,322

Lazio 2 (Sculli 6, 18)
Palermo 0 Att: 24,251

Napoli 0
Brescia 0 Att: 29,146

Sampdoria 2 (Volta 83, Maccarone pen 90+2)
Cesena 3 (Parolo 42, Giaccherini 46, 47)
Att: 21,215

Udinese 1 (Di Natale pen 76)
Bari 0 Att: 15,904

Friday, March 11
Brescia 1 (Caracciolo 83)
Internazionale 1 (Eto'o 17) Att: 24,000

Saturday, March 12
Cesena 2 (Jimenez pen 41, Parolo 80)
Juventus 2 (Matri 19, 34) Att: 21,932

Sunday, March 13
Cagliari 0
Udinese 4 (Benatia 42, Sanchez 44, Di Natale 47, 54) Att: 10,000

Catania 1 (Llama 74)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 15,000

Chievo 0
Fiorentina 1 (Vargas 47) Att: 10,489

Genoa 1 (Floro Flores 77)
Palermo 0 Att: 21,657

Lecce 0
Bologna 1 (Ramirez 33) Att: 6,958

Milan 1 (Cassano 82)
Bari 1 (Rudolf 38) Att: 61,363

Parma 1 (Palladino 29)
Napoli 3 (Hamsik 52, Lavezzi 55, Maggio 86)
Att: 16,273

Roma 2 (Totti 70, pen 90+3)
Lazio 0 Att: 48,955

Beaten...Braga (in red) v Benfica

League Cup semi-final victory over Sporting Lisbon, saw the run come to an end in their next game, with a 2-1 loss at Braga. Jorge Jesus' side now meet Pacos de Ferreira in the League Cup Final on April 23.

RUSSIA

Terek still pointless

Ruud Gullit is still waiting for his first point as coach of Terek after the Chechen club lost their opening two games of the season.

Terek were beaten by Rubin and Zenit – the only teams with 100 per cent records after two games.

Defending champions Zenit also won the Russian Super Cup, beating CSKA 1-0 with a goal from Aleksei Ionov. "Everything is important in these kinds of matches – mentality, fitness and tactics – but the main thing is your character and the absence of fear," said coach Luciano Spalletti.

"I want to thank my players for this trophy. I am also grateful to all the staff here at Zenit as their work is really important."

Zenit keeper Vyacheslav Malafeev missed his side's Europa League tie against Twente after his wife was killed in a car crash.

Zenit win...Konstantin Zyryanov

Saturday, March 19

Lazio 1 (Zarate 2)
Cesena 0 Att: 15,000

Palermo 1 (Goian 9)
Milan 0 Att: 27,000

Sunday, March 20

Bari 1 (Ghezzal pen 41)
Chievo 2 (Pellissier 37, Moscardelli 49) Att: 14,572

Bologna 1 (Di Vaio 28)
Genoa 1 (Dainelli 43) Att: 19,149

Fiorentina 2 (Mutu 21, Gamberini 34)
Roma 2 (Totti pen 27, 51) Att: 23,634

Internazionale 1 (Pazzini 52)
Lecce 0 Att: 62,477

Juventus 2 (Krasic 22, Del Piero 68)
Brescia 1 (Eder 41) Att: 19,162

Napoli 2 (Cavani pen 49, 60)
Cagliari 1 (Acquafresca 55) Att: 44,497

Sampdoria 0
Parma 1 (Zaccardo 65) Att: 21,895

Udinese 2 (Inler 22, Di Natale pen 73)
Catania 0 Att: 17,847

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	30	18	8	4	51	22	62
Inter	30	18	6	6	56	32	60
Napoli	30	18	5	7	46	27	59
Udinese	30	17	5	8	56	30	56
Lazio	30	16	6	8	36	25	54
Roma	30	14	8	8	47	41	50
Juventus	30	12	9	9	45	38	45
Palermo	30	13	4	13	45	46	43
Fiorentina	30	10	11	9	35	31	41
Bologna*	30	11	10	9	33	37	40
Cagliari	30	11	6	13	36	36	39
Genoa	30	10	9	11	29	33	39
Chievo	30	8	11	11	30	32	35
Parma	30	7	11	12	29	41	32
Catania	30	8	8	14	25	40	32
Sampdoria	30	7	10	13	25	34	31
Cesena	30	7	8	15	25	41	29
Lecce	30	7	7	16	31	52	28
Brescia	30	6	8	16	24	38	26
Bari	30	3	8	19	17	45	17

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated
**3pts deducted – 1pt for failing to pay tax on players' salaries, 2pts for failing to pay players' salaries*

LEADING GOALSCORERS

25 Antonio Di Natale (Udinese)
22 Edinson Cavani (Napoli)
19 Samuel Eto'o (Internazionale)
18 Marco Di Vaio (Bologna)
16 Alessandro Matri (Cagliari/Juventus)
14 Zlatan Ibrahimovic (Milan)

NORWAY

Mar 18: Sarpsborg 3 Molde 0.
Mar 19: Viking 0 Valerenga 2.
Mar 20: Stromsgodset 2 Sogndal 1; Tromso 2 Haugesund 0; Odd Grenland 0 Start 2; Stabaek 0 Lillestrom 7; Brann 2 Rosenborg 1.
Mar 21: Aalesund 1 Fredrikstad 2.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lillestrom	1	1	0	0	7	0	3
Sarpsborg	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Start	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Tromso	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Valerenga	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Brann	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Fredrikstad	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Stromsgodset	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Aalesund	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Rosenborg	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Sogndal	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Haugesund	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Odd Grenland	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Viking	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Molde	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
Stabaek	1	0	0	1	0	7	0

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

POLAND

Mar 4: Slask 0 Cracovia 0; Wisla 3 Ruch 1.
Mar 5: Gornik 5 Zaglebie 1; Widzew 3 Korona 1; Belchatow 0 Jagiellonia 0; Arka 0 Lech 3.
Mar 6: Lechia 2 Polonia Bytom 0; Legia 1 Polonia Warsaw 0.
Mar 8: Jagiellonia 1 Slask 1.
Mar 11: Legia 1 Slask 2; Gornik 2 Arka 2.
Mar 12: Korona 3 Polonia Bytom 3; Ruch 2 Belchatow 1; Wisla 2 Widzew 0; Jagiellonia 1 Lechia 2.
Mar 13: Zaglebie 1 Polonia Warsaw 0; Cracovia 1 Lech 0.
Mar 18: Arka 1 Zaglebie 1; Ruch 3 Gornik 0.
Mar 19: Polonia Warsaw 0 Widzew 1; Slask 2 Lechia 1; Lech 2 Jagiellonia 0; Cracovia 3 Korona 0.
Mar 20: Belchatow 2 Legia 0; Polonia Bytom 2 Wisla 2.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla	19	11	4	4	29	18	37
Jagiellonia	19	9	5	5	24	18	32
Legia	19	10	1	8	24	26	31
Lechia	19	9	3	7	27	21	30
Lech	19	8	4	7	24	15	28
Belchatow	19	8	4	7	23	21	28
Slask	19	7	7	5	26	23	28
Korona	19	7	6	6	25	27	27
Gornik	19	8	3	8	22	31	27
Ruch	19	6	6	7	18	18	24
Zaglebie	19	6	6	7	17	23	24
Widzew	19	6	6	7	27	22	24
Polonia W	19	5	6	8	23	21	21
Polonia B	19	4	8	7	19	24	20
Arka	19	4	7	8	12	21	19
Cracovia	19	4	4	11	23	34	16

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

PORTUGAL

Mar 4: Academica 0 Uniao Leiria 0.
Mar 5: Porto 2 Guimaraes 0.
Mar 6: Setubal 0 Olhanense 0; Maritimo 0 Rio Ave 1; Sporting 1 Beira Mar 0; Braga 2 Benfica 1.
Mar 7: Pacos Ferreira 0 Naval 0; Portimonense 1 Nacional 1.
Mar 11: Beira Mar 3 Pacos Ferreira 1.
Mar 12: Rio Ave 0 Sporting 0; Guimaraes 1 Setubal 1.
Mar 13: Naval 0 Maritimo 3; Nacional 1 Academica 1; Benfica 1 Portimonense 1.
Mar 14: Uniao Leiria 0 Porto 2.
Mar 18: Portimonense 2 Guimaraes 1.
Mar 19: Sporting 0 Uniao Leiria 0.
Mar 20: Setubal 2 Nacional 1; Naval 2 Beira Mar 2; Maritimo 4 Olhanense 0; Porto 3 Academica 1.
Mar 21: Braga 1 Rio Ave 0; Pacos Ferreira 1 Benfica 5.

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	24	22	2	0	56	8	68
Benfica	24	18	1	5	51	21	55
Sporting	24	10	8	6	33	25	38
Braga	23	10	4	9	37	29	34
Guimaraes	24	9	6	9	27	31	33
P Ferreira	24	8	9	7	24	30	33
Nacional	24	8	7	9	21	27	31
Uniao Leiria	24	8	6	10	19	27	30
Beira Mar	24	6	11	7	28	28	29
Maritimo	24	7	7	10	28	25	28
Olhanense	23	6	10	7	19	25	28
Rio Ave	24	7	6	11	22	27	27
Academica	24	6	7	11	29	39	25
Setubal	24	5	9	10	20	33	24
Portimonense	24	4	7	13	23	40	19
Naval	24	3	8	13	20	42	17

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Mar 4: Shamrock 3 Dundalk 1; Drogheda 0 UCD 1; Galway 0 St Patrick's 3; Derry 0 Sligo 1; Bray 1 Bohemians 3.
Mar 11: Bohemians 1 Drogheda 0; Dundalk 3 Galway 2; St Patrick's 2 Bray 3; UCD 0 Derry 2.
Mar 12: Sligo 0 Shamrock 1.
Mar 18: Bray 0 Sligo 0; Dundalk 0 Bohemians 0; Galway 0 UCD 0; Drogheda 2 Derry 2; Shamrock 2 St Patrick's 0.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shamrock	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Bohemians	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Derry	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Sligo	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Bray	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Dundalk	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
UCD	3	1	1	1	1	2	4
St Patrick's	3	1	0	2	5	5	3
Drogheda	3	0	1	2	2	4	1
Galway	3	0	1	2	2	6	1

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd & 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

ROMANIA

Mar 4: Urziceni 0 Tirgu-Mures 1; Dinamo 2 Pandurii 2.
Mar 5: Otelul 1 Rapid 0; Gloria 1 Sportul 0; CFR 1 Timisoara 2.
Mar 6: Gaz Metan 0 Astra 0; Steaua 0 Brasov 3.
Mar 7: Univ Craiova 1 Victoria 1; Vaslui 2 Univ Cluj 0.
Mar 11: Pandurii 0 Gloria 0; Victoria 0 Steaua 1.
Mar 12: Univ Cluj 4 Urziceni 2; Tirgu-Mures 1 Otelul 0; Rapid 0 Dinamo 0.
Mar 13: Sportul 0 Gaz Metan 1; Timisoara 4 Univ Craiova 0.
Mar 14: Astra 1 CFR 1; Brasov 1 Vaslui 1.
Mar 18: Gaz Metan 2 Pandurii 0; Victoria 0 Timisoara 2; Gloria 3 Rapid 2.
Mar 19: Otelul 3 Univ Cluj 0; Steaua 1 Vaslui 1.
Mar 20: CFR 2 Sportul 0; Univ Craiova 1 Astra 1; Dinamo 4 Tirgu-Mures 1.
Mar 21: Urziceni 1 Brasov 1.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Otelul	22	15	3	4	30	15	48
Timisoara	22	12	10	0	41	23	46
Vaslui	22	11	7	4	31	20	40
Dinamo	22	10	7	5	47	34	37
Gaz Metan	22	10	7	5	27	19	37
Steaua	22	10	6	6	28	20	36
Rapid	22	9	7	6	31	16	34
CFR	22	8	8	6	35	28	32
Astra	22	5	12	5	22	22	27
Gloria	22	7	6	9	25	29	27
Brasov	22	5	11	6	22	25	26
Tirgu-Mures	22	7	5	10	22	34	26
Univ Cluj	22	6	6	10	26	41	24
Univ Craiova	22	5	7	10	25	28	22
Victoria	22	4	8	10	26	37	20
Pandurii	22	4	8	10	19	32	20
Urziceni	22	4	7	11	15	29	19
Sportul	22	3	1	18	19	39	10

34-round season (17x2); bottom 4 will be relegated

RUSSIA

Mar 12: Anzhi 0 Krasnodar 0; Spartak Nalchik 1 Krylia Sovetov 0; Lokomotiv 3 Dynamo 2.
Mar 13: Kuban 0 Rubin 2; CSKA 2 Amkar 0; Terek 0 Zenit 1.
Mar 14: Volga 2 Tom 0; Rostov 4 Spartak Moscow 0.
Mar 19: Krasnodar 2 Spartak Nalchik 0; Dynamo 3 Rostov 1.
Mar 20: Tom 0 Kuban 1; Amkar 1 Lokomotiv 0; Rubin 2 Terek 0.
Mar 21: Zenit 2 Anzhi 0; Spartak Moscow 1 Volga 0.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rubin	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Zenit	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Krasnodar	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Rostov	2	1	0	1	5	3	3
CSKA	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Dynamo	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Volga	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Lokomotiv	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Amkar	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Kuban	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Spartak N	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Spartak M	2	1	0	1	1	4	3
Anzhi	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Krylia Sovetov	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Terek	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
Tom	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

30-round regular season (15x2); top 8 will form championship group; bottom 8 will form relegation group (the bottom 2 of this group will go down; 3rd & 4th bottom of this group will enter rel/prom play-offs)

SCOTLAND

Regular season

Mar 1: Hamilton 1 Hibernian 2; Inverness 0 Dundee United 2.
Mar 2: St Johnstone 0 Aberdeen 0.
Mar 5: Celtic 2 Hamilton 0; St Johnstone 1 Hibernian 1; Inverness 3 Motherwell 0; Hearts 0 Kilmarnock 2.
Mar 6: St Mirren 0 Rangers 1.
Mar 7: Dundee United 3 Aberdeen 1.
Mar 10: Dundee United 2 Hamilton 1.
Mar 13: Rangers 2 Kilmarnock 1.
Mar 16: Dundee United 2 Hearts 0.
Mar 19: Kilmarnock 3 Motherwell 1; Dundee United 1 Inverness 0; Hamilton 0 St Johnstone 0; Hearts 3 St Mirren 2.

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Closing...Red Star's Stevan Reljic

SERBIA

Coach run continues

Red Star Belgrade continued their impressive form under new coach Robert Prosinecki and closed the gap on leaders Partizan to three points.

Red Star have won four from four in the league since Prosinecki took over and, despite a Serbian Cup semi-final first leg defeat to their rivals, look set to push them all the way in the Super Liga, where they meet again on April 22.

SPAIN

Barca set new records

Barcelona continue to blaze a trail at the top of La Liga, setting new records as they go. Their 2-1 win over Getafe set a new club best of 27 consecutive league matches without defeat, while they managed a new Spanish record of 20 successive away games without defeat in La Liga when they beat Valencia.

Pep Guardiola's Barcelona side will play Manchester United in Washington on July 30 as part of a five-match pre-season tour of the United States by the Premier League leaders.

Barca...Adriano Correia (left)

CLUB FOOTBALL

SCOTLAND – REGULAR	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	28	21	4	3	61	17	67
Rangers	27	21	2	4	60	24	65
Hearts	30	18	4	8	44	28	58
Dundee Utd	29	12	10	7	38	33	46
Kilmarnock	30	13	6	11	46	36	45
Motherwell	30	11	4	15	32	41	37
Inverness	30	9	9	12	39	38	36
St Johnstone	29	8	9	12	18	34	33
Hibernian	29	9	5	15	31	45	32
Aberdeen	29	9	4	16	31	47	31
St Mirren	29	5	7	17	24	48	22
Hamilton	30	2	10	18	17	50	16

33-round regular season (11x3); top 6 will form championship group; bottom 6 will form relegation group (1 of them will go down)

LEAGUE CUP

Final

Mar 20 - Glasgow (Hampden)
Celtic 1 (Ledley 31)
Rangers 2 (Davis 24, Jelavic 98)
Aet. **HT:** 1-1. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 51,181.
Ref: Thomson
Sent off: Izaguirre (Celtic) 120+1min

SERBIA

Mar 5: Jagodina 1 Vojvodina 2; Indjija 1 Partizan 3; BSK 0 Spartak 0; Cukaricki 0 Rad 3; Metalac 2 OFK 0; Javor 1 Borac 1; Sloboda Sevojno 2 Hajduk 2; Red Star 1 Smederevo 0.
Mar 9: Vojvodina 2 BSK 1; OFK 1 Sloboda Sevojno 0; Spartak 0 Javor 0; Rad 2 Metalac 0; Hajduk 0 Partizan 4; Borac 3 Cukaricki 0; Smederevo 0 Jagodina 0; Red Star 3 Indjija 1.
Mar 12: Jagodina 0 Red Star 2; Cukaricki 0 Spartak 2; Sloboda Sevojno 0 Rad 0; Javor 0 Vojvodina 1; Metalac 0 Borac 0; BSK 0 Smederevo 0; Partizan 2 OFK 1.
Mar 16: Indjija 1 Hajduk 2.
Mar 19: Borac 1 Sloboda Sevojno 0; Spartak 2 Metalac 0; OFK 1 Hajduk 0; Smederevo 2 Javor 1; Jagodina 2 Indjija 0; Vojvodina 3 Cukaricki 0.
Mar 20: Rad 2 Partizan 2; Red Star 4 BSK 1.

SERBIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	19	16	2	1	52	15	50
Red Star	19	15	2	2	31	10	47
Vojvodina	19	13	5	1	31	7	44
Rad	19	10	6	3	28	11	36
Spartak	19	7	8	4	19	12	29
Smederevo	19	5	10	4	18	17	25
S Sevojno	19	6	7	6	21	21	25
OFK	19	7	4	8	16	17	25
Jagodina	19	6	6	7	16	17	24
Javor	19	5	8	6	14	16	23
Borac	19	4	9	6	12	19	21
BSK	19	4	7	8	12	26	19
Indjija	19	3	4	12	16	31	13
Metalac	19	3	4	12	11	29	13
Hajduk	19	2	6	11	13	28	12
Cukaricki	19	0	4	15	5	39	4

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SLOVAKIA

Mar 4: Nitra 0 Senica 5.
Mar 5: Kosice 1 DAC 0; Slovan 4 Tatran 0; Dukla 1 Spartak 2; Zilina 0 Dubnica 0; Zlate Moravce 3 Ruzomberok 0.
Mar 11: DAC 2 Zilina 2.
Mar 12: Kosice 0 Zlate Moravce 1; Dubnica 1 Slovan 1; Tatran 2 Dukla 1; Senica 4 Ruzomberok 0; Spartak 4 Nitra 1.
Mar 15: Ruzomberok 0 Spartak 0; Dukla 1 Dubnica 0; Zilina 2 Kosice 0; Zlate Moravce 0 Senica 0; Nitra 1 Tatran 0; Slovan 1 DAC 0.
Mar 18: Senica 4 Spartak 0.
Mar 19: Zilina 1 Zlate Moravce 0; Slovan 4 Kosice 0; Dukla 2 DAC 0; Ruzomberok 0 Tatran 1; Nitra 1 Dubnica 1.

SLOVAKIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zilina	23	12	9	2	43	20	45
Senica	23	13	5	5	38	19	44
Slovan	23	10	8	5	41	19	38
Spartak	23	9	9	5	29	18	36
Dukla	23	10	6	7	28	19	36
Zlate Moravce	23	8	7	8	25	23	31
DAC	23	7	7	9	20	23	28
Tatran	23	7	5	11	17	28	26
Nitra	23	7	5	11	18	37	26
Ruzomberok	23	6	6	11	15	30	24
Kosice	23	5	6	12	19	34	21
Dubnica	23	4	7	12	15	38	19

33-round season (11x3); bottom team will be relegated

SLOVENIA

Mar 5: Celje 1 Rudar 0; Koper 0 Triglav 1; Maribor 1 Gorica 2; Olimpija 2 Nafta 0.
Mar 6: Primorje 0 Domzale 0.
Mar 12: Nafta 2 Domzale 3; Rudar 0 Koper 1; Gorica 1 Celje 1; Olimpija 0 Maribor 0.
Mar 13: Triglav 2 Primorje 0.
Mar 16: Primorje 0 Rudar 6; Celje 1 Olimpija 3; Domzale 3 Triglav 1; Maribor 0 Nafta 1; Koper 2 Gorica 2.
Mar 19: Rudar 3 Domzale 1; Olimpija 4 Koper 0; Nafta 1 Triglav 1; Gorica 4 Primorje 1; Maribor 2 Celje 0.

SLOVENIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maribor	24	15	7	2	43	13	52
Domzale	24	13	5	6	36	22	44
Koper	24	11	4	9	35	33	37
Olimpija	24	9	7	8	35	27	34
Rudar	24	8	7	9	42	36	31
Gorica	24	8	7	9	30	36	31
Nafta	24	8	5	11	34	38	29
Triglav	24	7	7	10	25	40	28
Celje	24	5	8	11	29	41	23
Primorje	24	5	5	14	28	51	20

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

SPAIN

Tuesday, March 1
Espanyol 1 (Alvaro 19)
Mallorca 2 (Webo 63, Nsue 83) Att: 20,134

Sevilla 3 (Luis Fabiano pen 28, Perotti 35, Negredo 65)
Sporting Gijon 0 Att: 25,000

Wednesday, March 2
Getafe 1 (Manu 3)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Elias 80) Att: 10,000

Osasuna 0
Deportivo La Coruna 0 Att: 15,000

Real Sociedad 1 (Zurutuza 53)
Levante 1 (Del Horno 76) Att: 20,000

Valencia 0
Barcelona 1 (Messi 77) Att: 50,800

Villarreal 1 (Rossi 22)
Hercules 0 Att: 18,000

Zaragoza 2 (Jarosik 49, Uche 54)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Llorente 17) Att: 17,000

Thursday, March 3
Almeria 1 (Crusat 64)
Racing Santander 1 (Colsa 37) Att: 14,500

Real Madrid 7 (Benzema 26, 61, Di Maria 35, Marcelo 44, Cristiano Ronaldo 51, pen 68, 76)
Malaga 0 Att: 51,000

Saturday, March 5
Atletico Madrid 3 (Reyes 4, Aguero 67, Forlan 72)
Villarreal 1 (Rossi 34) Att: 30,000

Barcelona 1 (Keita 43)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 78,965

Mallorca 1 (Ramis pen 31)
Valencia 2 (Pablo 33, 55) Att: 14,000

Sunday, March 6
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Fazio og 66, Iraola pen 87)
Sevilla 0 Att: 37,000

Hercules 1 (Abraham Paz 49)
Almeria 2 (Feghouli 69, M'Bami 73) Att: 18,000

Levante 1 (Caicedo 27)
Espanyol 0 Att: 13,600

Malaga 0
Osasuna 1 (Sergio 90+2) Att: 25,000

Racing Santander 1 (Bakircioglu 69)
Real Madrid 3 (Adebayor 22, Benzema 27, 74) Att: 20,000

Sporting Gijon 2 (De las Cuevas 31, Andre Castro 40)
Getafe 0 Att: 16,000

Monday, March 7
Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Riki 40, Adrian 57)
Real Sociedad 1 (Agirretxe 65) Att: 14,000

Saturday, March 12
Almeria 2 (Crusat 48, Goitom 77)
Atletico Madrid 2 (Aguero 39, 61) Att: 13,228

Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 23, 55)
Hercules 0 Att: 71,000

Zaragoza 4 (Jarosik 5, Ander 39, Gabi pen 64, pen 74)
Valencia 0 Att: 30,000

Sunday, March 13
Espanyol 2 (Ivan Alonso 62, Verdu 81)
Deportivo La Coruna 0 Att: 24,819

Levante 1 (Juanlu 36)
Mallorca 1 (Ramis 60) Att: 11,722

Osasuna 3 (Sola 20, Nekounam pen 23, Soriano 50)
Racing Santander 1 (Rosenberg 51) Att: 15,854

Real Sociedad 0
Malaga 2 (Duda 24, Rondon 58) Att: 20,000

Sevilla 1 (Jesus Navas 49)
Barcelona 1 (Bojan 30) Att: 45,000

Villarreal 1 (Rossi 28)
Sporting Gijon 1 (Diego Castro pen 90+2) Att: 20,000

Monday, March 14
Getafe 2 (Manu 58, 83)
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Manu og 68, Urko Vera 90+1) Att: 6,000

Saturday, March 19
Atletico Madrid 1 (Aguero 86)
Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 11, Ozil 31) Att: 53,000

Barcelona 2 (Daniel Alves 17, Bojan 50)
Getafe 1 (Manu 88) Att: 81,913

Mallorca 1 (De Guzman 67)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 13,200

Sunday, March 20
Athletic Bilbao 0
Villarreal 1 (Ruben 57) Att: 37,000

Deportivo La Coruna 0
Levante 1 (Ruben Suarez 89) Att: 18,000

Hercules 0
Osasuna 4 (Camunas 9, Nelson 34, Vadocz 61, Sola 67) Att: 17,000

Malaga 2 (Rondon 8, 26)
Espanyol 0 Att: 27,000

Racing Santander 2 (Bakircioglu 43, Dos Santos 76)
Real Sociedad 1 (Griezmann 72) Att: 16,681

Sporting Gijon 1 (De las Cuevas 13)
Almeria 0 Att: 18,000

Valencia 0
Sevilla 1 (Rakitic 69) Att: 40,000

SPAIN	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	29	25	3	1	81	15	78
Real Madrid	29	23	4	2	69	21	73
Villarreal	29	16	6	7	48	30	54
Valencia	29	16	6	7	42	33	54
Espanyol	29	14	1	14	37	41	43
Ath Bilbao	29	13	3	13	44	41	42
Sevilla	29	12	6	11	43	43	42
At Madrid	29	11	6	12	42	39	39
Mallorca	29	11	5	13	30	38	38
Osasuna	29	9	8	12	34	33	35
R Sociedad	29	11	2	16	39	48	35
Levante	29	10	5	14	30	39	35
Getafe	29	9	7	13	39	45	34
R Santander	29	8	9	12	28	43	33
Sporting Gijon	29	7	11	11	27	35	32
Dep Coruna	29	7	10	12	23	39	31
Zaragoza	29	7	9	13	28	40	30
Malaga	29	8	5	16	38	59	29
Almeria	29	5	11	13	30	48	26
Hercules	29	7	5	17	25	47	26

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS

27	Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid)
27	Lionel Messi (Barcelona)
17	David Villa (Barcelona)
15	Fernando Llorente (Athletic Bilbao)
15	Giuseppe Rossi (Villarreal)
13	Pedro (Barcelona)

SPANISH CUP

Final

April 20 - Valencia (Mestalla)
Barcelona v Real Madrid

27 points Galatasaray are behind league leaders and arch-rivals Fenerbahce – a gap that cost coach Gheorghe Hagi his job

SWEDEN

Cup holders triumph

Domestic Cup holders Helsingborg won the Swedish Super Cup for the first time, beating league champions Malmo 2-1 in the traditional season opener. Marcus Nilsson and Erik Sundin scored for Helsingborg, with Brazilian midfielder Wilton Figueiredo replying for Malmo.

SWITZERLAND

Basle go seven clear

Basle opened up a seven-point lead at the top of the Super League with a 2-1 win at Grasshopper.

Marco Streller put the visitors ahead just before the break, but they were pegged back in the 65th minute by Nzuzi Bundebele. Alexander Frei then scored the winner nine minutes from time.

UKRAINE

Cocis rocks Shakhtar

Leaders Shakhtar lost for only the second time in the league this season, going down to a Razvan Cocis goal at Karpaty. Normal service was resumed a week later with a 4-0 win against Volyn.

Wall...Basle stop Grasshopper

SWITZERLAND

Mar 5: Sion 2 St Gallen 0; Grasshopper 3 Young Boys 2.
Mar 6: Xamax 1 Bellinzona 2; Thun 3 Lucerne 3; Basle 3 Zurich 1.
Mar 12: Lucerne 1 Grasshopper 0; Zurich 2 Sion 0.
Mar 13: Bellinzona 0 Basle 4; St Gallen 0 Young Boys 2; Thun 1 Xamax 0.
Mar 19: Xamax 1 Zurich 2; St Gallen 1 Bellinzona 0.
Mar 20: Grasshopper 1 Basle 2; Sion 1 Thun 0; Young Boys 3 Lucerne 1.

SWITZERLAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Basle	25	16	5	4	54	30	53
Zurich	25	13	7	5	51	34	46
Young Boys	25	11	8	6	44	35	41
Lucerne	25	11	7	7	49	36	40
Sion	25	11	6	8	35	22	39
Thun	25	6	14	5	32	29	32
Bellinzona	25	6	7	12	30	53	25
Grasshopper	25	5	8	12	27	39	23
Xamax	25	6	4	15	33	48	22
St Gallen	25	6	2	17	21	50	20

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

TURKEY

Mar 4: Kayserispor 1 Manisaspor 2.
Mar 5: Konyaspor 0 Ankaragucu 2; Gaziantepspor 3 Sivasspor 1; Galatasaray 0 Karabukspor 0.
Mar 6: Kasimpasa 2 Antalyaspor 3; Bursaspor 1 Istanbul BB 1; Eskisehirspor 1 Bucaspor 0; Besiktas 1 Trabzonspor 2.
Mar 7: Genclerbirligi 2 Fenerbahce 4.
Mar 11: Manisaspor 0 Besiktas 0.
Mar 12: Karabukspor 1 Bursaspor 1; Istanbul BB 0 Eskisehirspor 2; Trabzonspor 1 Kasimpasa 0.
Mar 13: Antalyaspor 0 Genclerbirligi 0; Ankaragucu 3 Galatasaray 2; Bucaspor 2 Gaziantepspor 1; Sivasspor 1 Kayserispor 0; Fenerbahce 2 Konyaspor 0.
Mar 18: Galatasaray 1 Fenerbahce 2.
Mar 19: Kasimpasa 1 Manisaspor 0; Gaziantepspor 4 Istanbul BB 1; Konyaspor 0 Antalyaspor 0; Besiktas 4 Kayserispor 2.
Mar 20: Eskisehirspor 1 Karabukspor 0; Genclerbirligi 1 Trabzonspor 2; Bucaspor 0 Sivasspor 4.
Mar 21: Bursaspor 0 Ankaragucu 0.

TURKEY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fenerbahce	26	19	3	4	62	27	60
Trabzonspor	26	18	6	2	54	21	60
Bursaspor	26	14	9	3	42	20	51
Gaziantepspor	26	13	7	6	34	22	46
Kayserispor	26	12	7	7	35	27	43
Eskisehirspor	26	11	8	7	29	25	41
Besiktas	26	11	6	9	41	31	39
Manisaspor	26	11	2	13	39	40	35
Istanbul BB	26	10	4	12	32	32	34
Karabukspor	26	9	7	10	38	40	34
Galatasaray	26	10	3	13	29	34	33
Ankaragucu	26	8	8	10	36	43	32
Antalyaspor	26	7	9	10	24	34	30
Genclerbirligi	26	7	7	12	28	41	28
Sivasspor	26	6	7	13	32	46	25
Bucaspor	26	5	6	15	19	40	21
Konyaspor	26	3	8	15	20	39	17
Kasimpasa	26	4	5	17	23	55	17

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

UKRAINE

Mar 3: Sevastopol 0 Shakhtar 1.
Mar 4: Metalurh Zaporizhya 0 Illichivets 4.
Mar 5: Zorya 3 Volyn 0; Metalurh Donetsk 0 Dynamo 2; Kryvbas 2 Obolon 2; Vorskla 0 Metalist 0.
Mar 6: Dnipro 2 Tavriya 2; Arsenal 2 Karpaty 2.
Mar 11: Obolon 1 Metalurh Zaporizhya 0.
Mar 12: Metalurh Donetsk 1 Sevastopol 0; Tavriya 2 Kryvbas 1; Volyn 0 Arsenal 0.
Mar 13: Illichivets 2 Zorya 2; Karpaty 1 Shakhtar 0; Metalist 2 Dnipro 2; Dynamo 2 Vorskla 0.
Mar 18: Vorskla 1 Metalurh Donetsk 1.
Mar 19: Zorya 1 Obolon 0; Sevastopol 3 Karpaty 1; Kryvbas 0 Metalist 0.
Mar 20: Metalurh Zaporizhya 2 Tavriya 2; Dnipro 1 Dynamo 0; Shakhtar 4 Volyn 0; Arsenal 3 Illichivets 1.

UKRAINE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shakhtar	22	19	1	2	43	8	58
Dynamo	22	14	4	4	39	18	46
Metalist	22	12	5	5	40	21	41
Dnipro	22	11	7	4	32	15	40
Karpaty	22	10	6	6	28	23	36
Arsenal	22	8	6	8	27	27	30
Volyn	22	8	5	9	20	28	29
Tavriya	22	7	7	8	36	36	28
Zorya	22	6	8	8	26	30	26
Obolon	22	7	5	10	19	27	26
Metalurh D	22	7	5	10	23	32	26
Vorskla	22	6	7	9	25	25	25
Illichivets	22	5	7	10	33	50	22
Kryvbas	22	3	11	8	21	31	20
Sevastopol	22	4	5	13	15	35	17
Metalurh Z	22	2	5	15	10	31	11

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Group 1

Mar 2
San Luis (Mex) 1 (Arroyo 18)
Once Caldas (Col) 1 (Renteria 3)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Antequera (Bol)

Mar 8
Libertad (Par) 5 (Rojas 14, Orue 19, Maciel 28, Ayala 50, Pouso 85)
Universidad San Martin (Per) 1 (Alemmano 5)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Silvera (Uru)

Mar 15
Once Caldas 1 (Nunez 79)
San Luis 1 (Medina 90+4)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ponce (Ecu)
Sent off: Ponce 62min, Rangel 88min (both San Luis); Henriquez (Once Caldas) 88min

Mar 15
Universidad San Martin 0
Libertad 1 (Aquino pen 24)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Lopes (Bra)
Sent off: Moreyra (San Martin) 24min

Mar 22
Libertad 2 (Pavlovich 16, 90+4)
Once Caldas 2 (Renteria 12, 19)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Prudente (Uru)

Mar 22
San Luis 3 (Medina 4, Arroyo 14, 75)
Universidad San Martin 1 (Quinteros 61)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Abal (Arg)
Sent off: Quinteros (San Martin) 78min

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libertad	5	3	2	0	11	5	11
San Martin	5	2	0	3	7	9	6
San Luis	5	1	2	2	6	7	5
Once Caldas	5	0	4	1	5	8	4

Feb 15	San Luis v Libertad	1-2
Feb 16	Once Caldas v San Martin	0-3
Feb 22	Once Caldas v Libertad	1-1
	San Martin v San Luis	2-0
Mar 2	San Luis v Once Caldas	1-1
Mar 8	Libertad v San Martin	5-1
Mar 15	Once Caldas v San Luis	1-1
	San Martin v Libertad	0-1
Mar 22	Libertad v Once Caldas	2-2
	San Luis v San Martin	3-1
Apr 19	Libertad v San Luis	
	San Martin v Once Caldas	

Group 2

Mar 3
Gremio (Bra) 2 (Andre Lima 42, Borges pen 55)
Leon (Per) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Osses (Chl)

Mar 9
Oriente Petrolero (Bol) 1 (Arce 90+2)
Atletico Junior (Col) 2 (Cortes 27, Paez 46)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Favale (Arg)

Mar 17
Atletico Junior 2 (Bacca 65, pen 72)
Oriente Petrolero 1 (Campos 48)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Soto (Ven)
Sent off: Aguirre (Oriente) 57min

Mar 17
Leon 1 (Elias 44)
Gremio 1 (Carlos Alberto 54)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Garcia (Mex)

Mar 24
Oriente Petrolero 2 (Pena 17, Campos 78)
Leon 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Intriago (Ecu)

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
At Junior	4	4	0	0	8	4	12
Gremio	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Leon	5	1	1	3	3	7	4
Oriente	5	1	0	4	4	8	3

Feb 17	Gremio v Oriente	3-0
	Leon v Junior	1-2
Feb 23	Leon v Oriente	1-0
Feb 24	Junior v Gremio	2-1
Mar 3	Gremio v Leon	2-0
Mar 9	Oriente v Junior	1-2
Mar 17	Junior v Oriente	2-1
	Leon v Gremio	1-1
Mar 24	Oriente v Leon	2-0
Apr 7	Gremio v Junior	
Apr 14	Junior v Leon	
	Oriente v Gremio	

Group 3

Mar 2
America (Mex) 1 (Marquez 70)
Fluminense (Bra) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)

Mar 2
Nacional (Uru) 0
Argentinos Juniors (Arg) 1 (Niell 21)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Arias (Par)

Mar 15
Argentinos Juniors 0
Nacional 1 (Garcia 34)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Osses (Chl)

Mar 23
Fluminense 3 (Gum 21, Araujo 80, Deco 87)
America 2 (Sanchez 15, 72)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Arias (Par)

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentinos	4	2	1	1	6	4	7
America	4	2	0	2	6	6	6
Fluminense	4	1	2	1	5	5	5
Nacional	4	1	1	2	1	3	4

Feb 9	Fluminense v Argentinos	2-2
Feb 15	America v Nacional	2-0
Feb 23	Fluminense v Nacional	0-0
Feb 24	Argentinos v America	3-1
Mar 2	America v Fluminense	1-0
	Nacional v Argentinos	0-1
Mar 15	Argentinos v Nacional	0-1
Mar 23	Fluminense v America	3-2
Apr 6	America v Argentinos	
	Nacional v Fluminense	
Apr 20	Argentinos v Fluminense	
	Nacional v America	

Group 4

Mar 3
Caracas (Ven) 2 (Edgar Jimenez pen 39, Barahona 54)
Union Espanola (Chl) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Vera (Ecu)

Mar 3
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 3 (Ortiz 20, Fernandez 21, Papa 45+1)
Universidad Catolica (Chl) 4 (Pratto 1, 88, Costa 74, Pizarro 90+1)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Torres (Par)
Sent off: Ortiz (Velez) 52min

Mar 9
Universidad Catolica 1 (Calandria 53)
Caracas 3 (Cabezas 46, 50, Barahona 49)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Orozco (Bol)
Sent off: Martinez (Catolica) 69min

Mar 10
Union Espanola 2 (Liguera 3, Leal 26)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Ramirez 69)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Seneme (Bra)

Mar 22
Caracas 0
Universidad Catolica 2 (Villanueva 49, Pratto 85)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Delgadillo (Mex)
Sent off: Barahona (Caracas) 88min

Mar 24
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Papa 23, Silva 69)
Union Espanola 1 (Delgado 34)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Fagundes (Bra)

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On top...Olimpo celebrate

ARGENTINA

Olimpo going strong

Tipped for relegation at the start of the season, current second division champions Olimpo from the port city of Bahia Blanca lead the clausura after beating Boca Juniors 2-0.

Gimnasia are still yet to win a derby match at the Estadio Unico home they share with La Plata rivals Estudiantes after they lost 2-0 in the most recent *Clasico del Terremoto* (earthquake derby). Since the stadium opened in 2003, Estudiantes have won seven of the nine derbies, drawing two.

The game between Velez Sarsfield and San Lorenzo was abandoned after a fan died during violent clashes between supporters before the game.

COLOMBIA

Junior's home woes

Despite booking their place in the knockout stage of the Libertadores Cup with a 2-1 victory over Bolivia's Oriente Petrolero, Atletico Junior are struggling domestically.

A 3-0 defeat away to La Equidad meant they dropped to 15th in the league. At the top, a third consecutive victory for Atletico Nacional with

15 goals scored by Cruzeiro in their three Libertadores Cup home games this year. They have yet to score away

CLUB FOOTBALL

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Univ Catolica	4	2	1	1	9	8	7
Velez	4	2	0	2	9	7	6
Caracas	4	2	0	2	5	6	6
Espanola	4	1	1	2	5	7	4

Feb 15	Velez v Caracas	3-0
Feb 16	Espanola v Catolica	2-2
Mar 3	Caracas v Espanola	2-0
	Velez v Catolica	3-4
Mar 9	Catolica v Caracas	1-3
Mar 10	Espanola v Velez	2-1
Mar 22	Caracas v Catolica	0-2
Mar 24	Velez v Espanola	2-1
Apr 5	Espanola v Caracas	
Apr 7	Catolica v Velez	
Apr 14	Caracas v Velez	
	Catolica v Espanola	

Group 5

Mar 1
Deportivo Tachira (Ven) 2 (Gutierrez 87, 88)
Colo Colo (Chl) 4 (Miralles 20, 45+1, Paredes 71, Wilchez 83)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Ponce (Ecu)

Mar 2
Santos (Bra) 1 (Elano pen 55)
Cerro Porteno (Par) 1 (Nanni pen 90+2)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Baldassi (Arg)

Mar 10
Cerro Porteno 1 (Nanni 28)
Deportivo Tachira 1 (Herrera 61)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ubriaco (Uru)

Mar 16
Colo Colo 3 (Paredes 27, Miralles 35, Scotti 42)
Santos 2 (Elano 5, Neymar 49)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Pezzotta (Arg)

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	3	2	0	1	9	9	6
Cerro Porteno	3	1	2	0	7	4	5
Santos	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Dep Tachira	3	0	2	1	3	5	2

Feb 15	Tachira v Santos	0-0
Feb 17	Cerro Porteno v Colo Colo	5-2
Mar 1	Tachira v Colo Colo	2-4
Mar 2	Santos v Cerro Porteno	1-1
Mar 10	Cerro Porteno v Tachira	1-1
Mar 16	Colo Colo v Santos	3-2
Apr 6	Santos v Colo Colo	
	Tachira v Cerro Porteno	
Apr 12	Colo Colo v Tachira	
Apr 14	Cerro Porteno v Santos	
Apr 20	Colo Colo v Cerro Porteno	
	Santos v Tachira	

Group 6

Mar 8
Jaguares (Mex) 2 (Torres pen 43, Salazar 67)
Emelec (Ecu) 1 (Menendez 69)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Escalante (Ven)

Mar 16
Emelec 1 (Quiroz pen 54)
Jaguares 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Carrillo (Per)

Mar 16
Jorge Wilstermann (Bol) 1 (Brown 8)
Internacional (Bra) 4 (Brown og 16, Leandro Damiao 19, Ze Roberto 25, Kleber 82)
HT: 1-3. **Ref:** Caceres (Par)

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Internacional	3	2	1	0	9	2	7
Emelec	4	2	1	1	4	3	7
Jaguares	4	2	0	2	4	6	6
Wilstermann	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

Feb 16	Emelec v Internacional	1-1
	Jaguares v Wilstermann	2-0
Feb 22	Emelec v Wilstermann	1-0
Feb 23	Internacional v Jaguares	4-0
Mar 8	Jaguares v Emelec	2-1
Mar 16	Emelec v Jaguares	1-0
	Wilstermann v Internacional	1-4
Mar 30	Internacional v Wilstermann	
Apr 6	Jaguares v Internacional	
Apr 7	Wilstermann v Emelec	
Apr 19	Internacional v Emelec	
	Wilstermann v Jaguares	

Group 7

Mar 2
Deportes Tolima (Col) 0
Cruzeiro (Bra) 0
Ref: Larrionda (Uru)

Mar 9
Guarani (Par) 1 (Caballero pen 44)
Estudiantes de La Plata (Arg) 2 (Barrientos 51, Gonzalez 53)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Carrillo (Per)

Mar 16
Cruzeiro 6 (Montillo 3, Wallyson 32, Roger 62, pen 71, Gilberto 88, Thiago Ribeiro 90+2)
Deportes Tolima 1 (Marrugo 68)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Vera (Ecu)
Sent off: Julian Hurtado (Tolima) 87min

Mar 17
Estudiantes de La Plata 5 (Lopez 2, 19, 59, Gonzalez 25, 82)
Guarani 1 (Julian Benitez 79)
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Vazquez (Uru)
Sent off: Roncaglia (Estudiantes) 51min

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruzeiro	4	3	1	0	15	1	10
Estudiantes	4	3	0	1	8	7	9
Tolima	4	1	1	2	2	7	4
Guarani	4	0	0	4	2	12	0

Feb 15	Tolima v Guarani	1-0
Feb 16	Cruzeiro v Estudiantes	5-0
Feb 22	Cruzeiro v Guarani	4-0
Feb 23	Estudiantes v Tolima	1-0
Mar 2	Tolima v Cruzeiro	0-0
Mar 9	Guarani v Estudiantes	1-2
Mar 16	Cruzeiro v Tolima	6-1
Mar 17	Estudiantes v Guarani	5-1
Mar 30	Guarani v Cruzeiro	
	Tolima v Estudiantes	
Apr 13	Estudiantes v Cruzeiro	
	Guarani v Tolima	

Group 8

Mar 1
Godoy Cruz (Arg) 1 (Ramirez 31)
Penarol (Uru) 3 (Olivera 1, 42, Aguiar 67)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Oliveira (Bra)

Mar 3
LDU Quito (Ecu) 3 (Ambrossi 11, M Bolanos 52, Urrutia 79)
Independiente (Arg) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)

Mar 9
Penarol 1 (Aguiar 57)
LDU Quito 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Rivera (Per)

Mar 10
Independiente 1 (Parra 16)
Godoy Cruz 3 (Fredes og 28, Rojas 32, Ramirez 56)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Loustau (Arg)

Mar 17
LDU Quito 5 (Luna 22, Calderon 45+1, 78, Valdez og 58, Barcos pen 64)
Penarol 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)
Sent off: Hidalgo (LDU) 67min

Mar 23
Godoy Cruz 1 (Ramirez 34)
Independiente 1 (Defederico 1)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Baldassi (Arg)

LIBERTADORES CUP – GROUP 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Godoy Cruz	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
LDU Quito	4	2	0	2	9	3	6
Penarol	4	2	0	2	4	9	6
Independiente	4	1	1	2	5	7	4

Feb 17	Godoy Cruz v LDU	2-1
Feb 24	Independiente v Penarol	3-0
Mar 1	Godoy Cruz v Penarol	1-3
Mar 3	LDU v Independiente	3-0
Mar 9	Penarol v LDU	1-0
Mar 10	Independiente v Godoy Cruz	1-3
Mar 17	LDU v Penarol	5-0
Mar 23	Godoy Cruz v Independiente	1-1
Mar 31	Penarol v Godoy Cruz	
Apr 5	Independiente v LDU	
Apr 12	LDU v Godoy Cruz	
	Penarol v Independiente	

Top 2 in each group qualify for 1st knockout round

ARGENTINA

Clausura

Friday, March 4
All Boys 0
San Lorenzo 3 (Mensegüez 69, Velazquez 89, Salgueiro 90+3)

Saturday, March 5
Gimnasia La Plata 0
Estudiantes 2 (Fernandez 52, Perez pen 84)

Newell's Old Boys 3 (Bieler 5, Fideleff 25, Sperdutti 58)
Huracan 3 (Maidana 28, Mateo og 41, Quintana 45)

Racing Club 4 (Luguercio 10, 12, Licht 17, Gutierrez 47)
Olimpo 3 (Maggiolo 51, 56, Bianchi Arce 58)

Sunday, March 6
Banfield 2 (Bologna pen 12, Achucarro 89)
Lanus 1 (Regueiro 90+5)

Godoy Cruz 2 (Faccioli 27, Villar 68)
Colon 3 (Acosta 24, Fuertes 39, 88)

Quilmes 1 (Caneo 23)
Tigre 2 (Stracqualursi 53, Echeverria 72)

River Plate 0
Argentinos Juniors 0

Velez Sarsfield 1 (Ortiz 39)
Boca Juniors 0

Monday, March 7
Arsenal 3 (Caffa 4, Krupoviesa pen 34, Leguizamon 81)
Independiente 0

Friday, March 11
Olimpo 1 (Maggiolo 61)
All Boys 0

Tigre 1 (Morales 56)
Banfield 2 (Garcia 24, Ferreyra 90+1)

Saturday, March 12
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Salcedo 78)
Arsenal 0

Lanus 0
Gimnasia La Plata 0

San Lorenzo 1 (Torres 66)
Boca Juniors 0

Sunday, March 13
Colon 0
Racing Club 4 (Luguercio 15, Gutierrez 42, 71, Hauche 85)

Estudiantes 0
Godoy Cruz 1 (Damonte 61)

River Plate 1 (Pavone pen 49)
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Silva 35, 85)

Monday, March 14
Huracan 2 (Zarate 40, Campora 67)
Quilmes 1 (Cauteruccio 80)

Independiente 4 (Cabrera 4, 12, Silvera 25, Castillo 80)
Newell's Old Boys 0

Saturday, March 19
All Boys 0
Colon 2 (Higuain 20, Moreno y Fabianesi 77)

Arsenal 1 (Obolo 17)
River Plate 1 (Maidana 14)

Godoy Cruz 2 (Olmedo 38, Hoyos og 68)
Lanus 0

Quilmes 1 (Morales 68)
Independiente 1 (Parra 24)

Sunday, March 20
Boca Juniors 0
Olimpo 2 (Rolle 40, Furch 90)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Argentinos Juniors 2 (Rius 6, Bogado 79)

Spot on...Libertad's Aquino

their 3-0 win against Cucuta Deportivo moved them up into second place, five points behind leaders Once Caldas.

PARAGUAY

Libertad go through

A 0-0 draw with Libertad in the Asuncion Clasico was Olimpia's third game without a win but they still remain comfortable leaders at the top of the apertura.

An 87th-minute goal from Luis Caceres against Sportivo Luqueno moved Cerro Porteno up into third place.

In the Libertadores Cup, Libertad became the first side to qualify for the competition's round of 16 when they beat Universidad San Martin 1-0 with a penalty from Sergio Aquino.

URUGUAY

Nacional creep up

A fourth straight victory in the clausura put Nacional third with a game in hand on leaders Defensor. Richard Porta scored twice and Santiago Garcia once as Nacional beat Cerro 3-0 in their latest outing.

Central Espanol, the league's last unbeaten side, lost their last two games.

On target...Nacional's Garcia

Racing Club 0
Estudiantes 1 (Lopez 85)

Monday, March 21
Banfield 2 (Gomez 21, Garcia 24)
Huracan 2 (Zarate 37, Campora 85)

Gimnasia La Plata 2 (Neira 37, 74)
Tigre 1 (Morales 26)

ARGENTINA – CLAUSURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpo	6	4	1	1	14	9	13
Racing Club	6	4	0	2	11	6	12
Estudiantes	6	4	0	2	6	3	12
Banfield	6	3	2	1	9	7	11
San Lorenzo	5	3	1	1	8	3	10
Godoy Cruz	6	3	1	2	12	9	10
Argentinos	6	2	4	0	5	2	10
Colon	6	3	1	2	9	10	10
River Plate	6	2	3	1	5	3	9
Arsenal	6	2	2	2	8	6	8
Velez	5	2	2	1	7	6	8
Gimnasia LP	6	2	2	2	7	8	8
Huracan	6	1	4	1	9	10	7
Lanus	6	2	1	3	7	8	7
Tigre	6	2	1	3	5	7	7
Independiente	6	1	3	2	7	7	6
All Boys	6	1	1	4	2	8	4
Boca Juniors	6	1	1	4	2	8	4
Newell's	6	1	1	4	6	13	4
Quilmes	6	0	1	5	4	10	1

19-round tournament (19x1); the 2 teams with the worst average points over the 3 most recent seasons will be relegated; the teams with 3rd and 4th worst averages enter rel/prom play-offs

LEADING GOALSCORERS

5 Esteban Fuertes (Colon)
5 Teofilo Gutierrez (Racing Club)
5 Ezequiel Maggiolo (Olimpo)
5 Juan Neira (Gimnasia La Plata)
4 Javier Campora (Huracan)
4 Diego Valeri (Lanus)

BOLIVIA

Adecuacion*

Mar 12: Mamore 2 Nacional 0; Guabira 0 Blooming 3.
Mar 13: La Paz 0 Universitario 2; Real Potosi 2 Aurora 1; The Strongest 0 San Jose 0; Oriente 6 Bolivar 0.
Mar 19: Mamore 1 Bolivar 2.
Mar 20: La Paz 0 Nacional 1; San Jose 2 Blooming 1; Aurora 0 The Strongest 1; Universitario 0 Real Potosi 1; Guabira 0 Oriente 1.

BOLIVIA – ADECUACION*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oriente	9	7	0	2	26	8	21
Bolivar	10	5	3	2	13	13	18
San Jose	10	5	2	3	13	13	17
Nacional	10	5	1	4	16	12	16
The Strongest	10	4	4	2	12	10	16
Aurora	10	4	3	3	16	14	15
Real Potosi	10	5	0	5	12	15	15
Blooming	10	4	1	5	13	11	13
Universitario	9	4	0	5	11	11	12
Guabira	10	4	0	6	13	18	12
Mamore	10	2	1	7	9	16	7
La Paz	10	2	1	7	7	20	7

22-round tournament (11x2); no relegation after adecuacion

**The adecuacion is a transitional tournament, to allow Bolivia to run its league on a European winter-like calendar, i.e. from the European autumn to the European spring*

CHILE

Apertura

Regular season

Mar 4: Audax Italiano 1 Cobreloa 0.
Mar 5: O'Higgins 3 Cobresal 0; Huachipato 3 Iquique 1; Univ Chile 0 San Felipe 2; Nublense 2 La Serena 3.
Mar 6: La Calera 2 Univ Concepcion 0; Wanderers 4 Morning 1; Espanola 1 Colo Colo 2; Palestino 1 Univ Catolica 2.
Mar 11: Colo Colo 2 La Calera 0.
Mar 12: Univ Concepcion 1 Audax Italiano 0; San Felipe 2 Huachipato 1.
Mar 13: Cobreloa 2 O'Higgins 3; La Serena 2 Palestino 3; Morning 1 Espanola 1; Iquique 4 Wanderers 1; Univ Catolica 2 Nublense 0.
Mar 18: Univ Catolica 2 Morning 1.
Mar 19: O'Higgins 1 Univ Chile 1; Espanola 3 Iquique 0; Nublense 1 San Felipe 0; Huachipato 0 La Serena 4.
Mar 20: Colo Colo 1 Cobreloa 1; Wanderers 3 Cobresal 0; Palestino 3 Univ Concepcion 2; La Calera 3 Audax Italiano 1.
Mar 24: Cobresal 2 Univ Chile 5.

CHILE – APERTURA: REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Univ Catolica	9	7	1	1	18	9	22
La Calera	9	6	1	2	13	8	19
Univ Chile	9	5	2	2	22	12	17
O'Higgins	8	5	1	2	19	14	16
Wanderers	9	4	2	3	17	13	14
Espanola	9	4	2	3	14	10	14
San Felipe	9	4	2	3	12	8	14
Audax Italiano	9	4	1	4	14	17	13
Huachipato	8	4	0	4	14	14	12
Cobresal	9	4	0	5	15	21	12
Palestino	8	3	1	4	13	15	10
U Concepcion	9	3	1	5	12	14	10
Morning	9	2	4	3	13	16	10
Colo Colo	8	3	1	4	10	14	10
La Serena	9	2	3	4	13	13	9
Cobreloa	9	2	2	5	8	12	8
Iquique	9	2	2	5	10	17	8
Nublense	9	2	0	7	10	20	6

17-round regular season (17x1); top 8 will enter championship play-offs; no relegation after apertura

COLOMBIA

Apertura

Regular season

Mar 4: Envigado 3 Indep Santa Fe 1.
Mar 5: Millonarios 3 Chico 1; Nacional 4 Junior 1.
Mar 6: La Equidad 1 America 0; Pereira 0 Huila 0; Quindio 0 Cucuta 1; Cartagena 2 Indep Medellin 0; Dep Cali 1 Itagui 0; Tolima 1 Once Caldas 3.
Mar 12: Indep Santa Fe 1 La Equidad 0; Indep Medellin 3 Tolima 1; Once Caldas 5 Quindio 1; Dep Cali 0 Millonarios 0.
Mar 13: Cucuta 4 Pereira 0; Itagui 1 America 0; Chico 3 Cartagena 0; Junior 1 Envigado 2; Huila 1 Nacional 3.
Mar 18: Once Caldas 2 Pereira 0.
Mar 19: Millonarios 2 Itagui 1; Quindio 2 Medellin 1; Nacional 3 Cucuta 0.
Mar 20: La Equidad 3 Junior 0; Cartagena 1 Dep Cali 1; America 2 Indep Santa Fe 0; Tolima 3 Chico 1; Envigado 1 Huila 1.

COLOMBIA – APERTURA: REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Once Caldas	7	6	1	0	18	5	19
Nacional	7	4	2	1	16	7	14
Itagui	7	4	1	2	10	8	13
Quindio	7	4	1	2	8	8	13
Envigado	7	3	3	1	12	9	12
Tolima	7	4	0	3	12	11	12
La Equidad	7	3	2	2	7	4	11
Millonarios	7	3	2	2	11	10	11
Ind Medellin	7	3	1	3	11	10	10
Cucuta	7	3	1	3	10	9	10
America	7	3	0	4	8	10	9
Huila	7	2	2	3	9	10	8
Cartagena	7	2	2	3	10	13	8
Chico	7	2	1	4	9	10	7
Junior	7	2	1	4	8	15	7
Ind Santa Fe	7	1	2	4	3	8	5
Dep Cali	7	1	2	4	3	9	5
Pereira	7	0	2	5	4	13	2

18-round regular season (17x1, plus 1 round of "clasicos"); top 8 enter championship play-offs; no relegation after apertura

ECUADOR

1st stage

Mar 2: Barcelona 0 Emelec 0.
Mar 5: Independiente 1 Dep Quito 6; Manta 1 El Nacional 0; Imbabura 1 Cuenca 2; Olmedo 1 LDU Loja 0.
Mar 6: Barcelona 4 Espoli 1.
Mar 9: Espoli 2 Imbabura 0; El Nacional 1 Independiente 0; Dep Quito 3 Olmedo 1; LDU Loja 0 Barcelona 0.
Mar 12: Manta 0 Cuenca 1; Imbabura 3 LDU Loja 2.
Mar 13: Independiente 2 Olmedo 0; LDU Quito 2 Espoli 0; El Nacional 2 Emelec 0; Barcelona 0 Dep Quito 1.
Mar 19: Dep Quito 3 Imbabura 2; Cuenca 2 El Nacional 2.
Mar 20: Olmedo 4 Barcelona 0; Espoli 0 Manta 0; Emelec 3 Independiente 1; LDU Loja 1 LDU Quito 2.
Mar 23: Emelec 3 Olmedo 1; Cuenca 0 LDU Quito 2.

ECUADOR – 1ST STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Quito	10	7	2	1	22	9	23
LDU Quito	9	7	1	1	19	5	22
Emelec	8	5	2	1	12	7	17
Cuenca	10	4	5	1	11	9	17
El Nacional	10	4	2	4	12	10	14
Olmedo	10	4	2	4	10	13	14
Manta	9	3	3	3	7	9	12
LDU Loja	10	3	2	5	10	12	11
Barcelona	10	2	5	3	7	11	11
Independiente	10	2	2	6	10	19	8
Espoli	10	1	2	7	10	18	5
Imbabura	10	1	2	7	9	17	5

22-round tournament (11x2); no relegation after 1st stage

PARAGUAY

Apertura

Mar 4: Libertad 4 Rubio Nu 1.
Mar 5: Nacional 2 Sol de America 0; 3 de Febrero 0 Tacuary 0; Olimpia 4 Guarani 3.
Mar 6: Caballero 1 Luqueno 0; Independiente 0 Cerro Porteno 1.
Mar 8: Tacuary 0 Olimpia 0.
Mar 9: Rubio Nu 1 3 de Febrero 0; Luqueno 2 Sol de America 2.
Mar 12: 3 de Febrero 3 Libertad 3; Caballero 0 Guarani 1; Nacional 0 Luqueno 0.
Mar 13: Sol de America 2 Cerro Porteno 3; Independiente 1 Tacuary 0; Olimpia 1 Rubio Nu 3.
Mar 16: Cerro Porteno 2 Caballero 2.
Mar 19: Rubio Nu 2 Independiente 2; 3 de Febrero 0 Nacional 2; Libertad 0 Olimpia 0.
Mar 20: Cerro Porteno 1 Luqueno 0; Tacuary 1 Caballero 1; Guarani 2 Sol de America 0.
Mar 23: Guarani 2 Rubio Nu 1.

PARAGUAY – APERTURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	10	7	2	1	24	9	23
Nacional	9	5	3	1	12	5	18
Cerro Porteno	8	4	3	1	13	10	15
Libertad	7	4	2	1	12	6	14
Guarani	7	4	2	1	11	7	14
Tacuary	10	3	5	2	7	6	14
Rubio Nu	10	3	4	3	13	14	13
Independiente	9	2	3	4	9	13	9
Caballero	10	2	3	5	9	15	9
Luqueno	10	1	4	5	10	18	7
3 de Febrero	10	1	3	6	8	14	6
Sol America	10	1	2	7	7	18	5

22-round tournament (11x2); no relegation after apertura

PERU

Regular season

Mar 4: San Martin 1 Juan Aurich 1.
Mar 5: Alianza Atletico 2 Cristal 1; Sport Boys 3 Inti Gas 1; Alianza Lima 2 Cienciano 0.
Mar 6: Huancayo 3 Cesar Vallejo 0; Melgar 1 Cobresol 2; CNI 0 Comercio 0.
Mar 7: Leon 2 Universitario 0.
Mar 11: CNI 3 San Martin 1.
Mar 12: Inti Gas 0 Alianza Lima 2; Cristal 2 Comercio 1; Juan Aurich 2 Leon 0; Universitario 2 Huancayo 1; Cesar Vallejo 2 Melgar 1.
Mar 13: Cobresol 2 Sport Boys 2; Cienciano 4 Alianza Atletico 0.
Mar 19: Huancayo 0 Juan Aurich 0; Comercio 2 San Martin 1; Sport Boys 1 Cesar Vallejo 1; Melgar 0 Universitario 0; Alianza Lima 0 Cobresol 0.
Mar 20: Leon 1 CNI 3; Cristal 1 Cienciano 0; Alianza Atletico 3 Inti Gas 0.

PERU – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alianza Lima	6	4	2	0	10	2	14
Cienciano	6	4	0	2	12	3	12
Juan Aurich	6	2	4	0	8	5	10
Cobresol	6	2	4	0	5	3	10
Cristal	6	3	1	2	7	6	10
CNI	6	2	3	1	9	8	9
Universitario	6	2	3	1	4	4	9
Sport Boys	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
Cesar Vallejo	6	2	1	3	7	8	7
Comercio	6	2	1	3	8	10	7
Inti Gas	6	2	1	3	6	10	7
Huancayo	6	1	3	2	6	5	6
Leon	6	2	0	4	4	7	6
Al Atletico	6	2	0	4	6	10	6
San Martin	6	1	2	3	5	8	5
Melgar	6	1	1	4	4	11	4

30-round regular season; top 2 will then meet in play-off games to decide the champions

URUGUAY

Clausura

Mar 5: El Tanque Sisley 0 Defensor 1; Rampla 1 Wanderers 4; Penarol 2 Bella Vista 1.
Mar 6: Danubio 3 Liverpool 2; Central Espanol 1 Fenix 1; Racing 1 Cerro 2; Nacional 3 Miramar Misiones 1.
Mar 7: Tacuarembo 2 River Plate 1.

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Up to third...Frenchman Metsu

JAPAN

Season set to restart

The J.League will resume on April 23, following its suspension due to the earthquake and tsunami of March 11. All matches in April will take place during the day to save electricity, while games involving Kashima Antlers and Vegalta Sendai – who suffered damage to their grounds and club facilities – may be rescheduled or played at a neutral venue.

The six rounds of matches that have been lost will now be played in July.

QATAR

Lekhwiya look set

With three games to go, Lekhwiya are closing in on their first championship as they sit seven points clear of second-placed Al Rayyan following their 3-1 win at home to Al Khor. Holders Al Gharafa have gradually rediscovered their winning form under former Qatar national coach Bruno Metsu and are up to third.

UAE

Final date for Al Ain

Al Ain twice came from behind and then snatched a last-minute winner to reach the Final of the Emirates Cup. Elias scored the 89th-minute penalty that beat Al Wasl 3-2 after Mohamed Ismail and Ivory Coast midfielder Ibrahima Keita had equalised. Al Shabab beat Al Wahda 3-2 in the other semi-final.

With just over half the season gone, league leaders Al Jazira remain unbeaten, with goals from Brazilian

Mar 12: Wanderers 0 Racing 1; Fenix 3 Rampla 0; Liverpool 0 Nacional 2.
Mar 13: El Tanque Sisley 1 Central Espanol 0; Miramar Misiones 1 Tacuarembo 0; River Plate 3 Danubio 1; Bella Vista 1 Defensor 1; Cerro 0 Penarol 2.
Mar 19: Defensor 2 Miramar Misiones 0; Rampla 4 El Tanque Sisley 2; Tacuarembo 1 Bella Vista 2.
Mar 20: Racing 2 Fenix 4; Nacional 3 Cerro 0; Danubio 0 Wanderers 0; Central Espanol 1 Liverpool 2.
Mar 24: El Tanque Sisley 2 Penarol 4.

URUGUAY – CLAUSURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Defensor	7	5	1	1	12	5	16
Fenix	7	4	2	1	12	8	14
Nacional	6	4	1	1	11	4	13
Penarol	6	4	1	1	11	8	13
Tacuarembo	7	4	0	3	9	8	12
C Espanol	7	3	2	2	11	6	11
Racing	7	3	2	2	12	10	11
Rampla	7	3	2	2	10	12	11
Danubio	7	3	1	3	11	12	10
Bella Vista	7	2	2	3	9	8	8
Liverpool	7	2	2	3	10	10	8
M Misiones	7	2	1	4	8	12	7
Cerro	7	2	1	4	6	14	7
Wanderers	7	1	2	4	7	8	5
Tanque Sisley	6	1	0	5	6	12	3
River Plate	6	1	0	5	7	15	3

15-round tournament (15x1); the 3 teams with fewest points in combined apertura/clausura table will be relegated

VENEZUELA

Clausura

Mar 1: Venezuela 1 Carabobo 5.
Mar 5: Petare 0 Zamora 0; Caroni 2 Tachira 1.
Mar 12: Carabobo 0 Monagas 0; Mineros 0 Aragua 1.
Mar 13: Yaracuyanos 1 Petare 1; Caracas 4 Venezuela 0; Lara 1 El Vigia 1; Anzoategui 2 Esppor 1; Zamora 5 Zulia 1.
Mar 15: Tachira 3 Estudiantes 1.
Mar 19: Mineros 1 Tachira 0.
Mar 20: Aragua 0 Monagas 0; Lara 0 Carabobo 3; Petare 5 Estudiantes 1; Esppor 3 Caroni 0; Zulia 2 Venezuela 1; Anzoategui 0 Yaracuyanos 1; Zamora 3 Trujillanos 0.

VENEZUELA – CLAUSURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zamora	10	6	3	1	20	8	21
Anzoategui	10	5	4	1	9	5	19
Caracas	9	5	2	2	13	7	17
Esppor	10	5	2	3	10	6	17
Yaracuyanos	10	4	5	1	9	7	17
Carabobo	10	4	4	2	19	11	16
Mineros	10	5	1	4	17	13	16
Aragua	10	4	3	3	9	5	15
Tachira	10	5	0	5	13	10	15
Monagas	10	3	5	2	12	5	14
El Vigia	11	4	2	5	15	14	14
Zulia	10	4	1	5	9	19	13
Petare	10	2	5	3	9	9	11
Trujillanos	9	3	2	4	9	11	11
Lara	10	2	3	5	9	13	9
Caroni	9	1	4	4	7	16	7
Venezuela	10	2	1	7	8	24	7
Estudiantes	10	0	3	7	6	20	3

17-round tournament (17x1); the 2 teams with fewest points in combined apertura/clausura table will be relegated

CONCACAF

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Quarter-finals

1st legs - February 22-24; 2nd legs - March 1-3
Columbus Crew (USA) v Real Salt Lake (USA)
0-0, 1-4 (agg 1-4)
Cruz Azul (Mex) v Santos Laguna (Mex)
2-0, 3-1 (agg 5-1)
Saprissa (CR) v Olimpia (Hnd)
1-0, 2-1 (agg 3-1)
Toluca (Mex) v Monterrey (Mex)
0-1, 0-1 (agg 0-2)

MEXICO

Clausura

Regular season

Mar 4: Tecos 1 Pachuca 0.
Mar 5: Monterrey 2 Queretaro 0; Guadalajara 0 Tigres 0; Santos 2 America 3; San Luis 0 Jaguares 0; Atlante 0 Pumas 2; Cruz Azul 0 Necaxa 0.
Mar 6: Toluca 1 Morelia 6; Puebla 2 Atlas 0.
Mar 11: Necaxa 0 Monterrey 1.
Mar 12: Jaguares 0 Tecos 2; Pachuca 0 Atlante 4; Tigres 1 San Luis 1; Atlas 1 Guadalajara 1; Queretaro 2 Puebla 1.
Mar 13: Toluca 3 Santos 1; Morelia 0 Pumas 1; America 0 Cruz Azul 2.
Mar 18: Tecos 0 Tigres 0.
Mar 19: Cruz Azul 1 Toluca 0; Santos 0 Morelia 1; Guadalajara 2 Queretaro 0; San Luis 1 Atlas 1; Atlante 5 Jaguares 1; Monterrey 2 America 1.
Mar 20: Puebla 1 Necaxa 0; Pumas 0 Pachuca 0.

MEXICO – CLAUSURA: REGULAR – GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tigres	11	5	5	1	13	5	20
Monterrey	11	6	1	4	16	11	19
Guadalajara	11	3	6	2	13	8	15
Tecos	11	4	1	6	12	21	13
Necaxa	11	3	2	6	5	8	11
Santos	11	3	1	7	10	18	10

MEXICO – CLAUSURA: REGULAR – GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atlante	11	5	1	5	17	10	16
San Luis	12	3	7	2	14	12	16
America	12	5	1	6	20	19	16
Toluca	11	4	3	4	18	16	15
Atlas	11	4	3	4	13	11	15
Pachuca	11	2	4	5	5	16	10

MEXICO – CLAUSURA: REGULAR – GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pumas	11	7	4	0	20	8	25
Morelia	11	6	3	2	22	14	21
Cruz Azul	11	6	3	2	19	11	21
Puebla	11	4	1	6	8	13	13
Queretaro	11	3	2	6	10	21	11
Jaguares	11	2	2	7	7	20	8

17-round regular season (17x1); top 2 in each group and the 2 other teams with most points, regardless of group, will enter championship play-offs; the team with worst average points over the 3 most recent seasons will be relegated

UNITED STATES

Regular season

Mar 15: Seattle 0 Los Angeles 1.
Mar 19: Vancouver 4 Toronto 2; DC United 3 Columbus 1; New York 1 Seattle 0; Dallas 1 Chicago 1; Houston 0 Philadelphia 1; Colorado 3 Portland 1; Chivas 2 Kansas City 3; San Jose 0 Salt Lake 1.
Mar 20: Los Angeles 1 New England 1.

USA – REGULAR – EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DC United	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Kansas City	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
New York	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Philadelphia	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Chicago	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
New England	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Houston	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Toronto	1	0	0	1	2	4	0
Columbus	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

USA – REGULAR – WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Los Angeles	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Vancouver	1	1	0	0	4	2	3
Colorado	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Salt Lake	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Dallas	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Chivas	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
San Jose	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Portland	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Seattle	2	0	0	2	0	2	0

34-round regular season (17x2); top 3 in each conference will enter championship play-offs automatically; the other 4 teams with most points, regardless of conference, will meet in 2 head-to-head ties, the winners of which will also enter championship play-offs; no relegation from this league

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Preliminary round

(delayed 2nd legs)
1st legs - Jan 29/30; 2nd legs - Mar 4-6
APR (Rwa) v Club Africain (Tun)
2-2, 0-4 (agg 2-6)
East End Lions (SLe) v Djoliba (Mli)
0-2, 0-2 (agg 0-4)
US Bitam (Gab) v Les Astres (Cam)
0-0, 0-0 (agg 0-0; US Bitam 5-3 on pens)
Vital'O (Bdi) v Cotonsport (Cam)
2-2, 1-1 (agg 3-3; Cotonsport on away goals)

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Mar 1: Al Hilal (Sau) 1 Sepahan (Irn) 2; Al Jazira (UAE) 0 Al Gharafa (Qat) 0.
Mar 15: Al Gharafa 0 Al Hilal 1; Sepahan 5 Al Jazira 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sepahan	2	2	0	0	7	2	6
Al Hilal	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Al Gharafa	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Al Jazira	2	0	1	1	1	5	1

Group B

Mar 1: Esteghlal (Irn) 1 Al Sadd (Qat) 1; Pakhtakor (Uzb) 2 Al Nassr (Sau) 2.
Mar 15: Al Nassr 2 Esteghlal 1.
Mar 16: Al Sadd 2 Pakhtakor 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Nassr	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
Al Sadd	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Pakhtakor	2	0	1	1	3	4	1
Esteghlal	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

Group C

Mar 2: Al Ittihad (Sau) 3 Persepolis (Irn) 1; Al Wahda (UAE) 1 Bunyodkor (Uzb) 1.
Mar 16: Bunyodkor 0 Al Ittihad 1; Persepolis 1 Al Wahda 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ittihad	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Al Wahda	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Bunyodkor	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Persepolis	2	0	1	1	2	4	1

Group D

Mar 2: Al Rayyan (Qat) 1 Al Shabab (Sau) 1; Zob Ahan (Irn) 2 Emirates (UAE) 1.
Mar 16: Al Shabab 0 Zob Ahan 0; Emirates 2 Al Rayyan 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zob Ahan	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Emirates	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Al Shabab	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Al Rayyan	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Group E

Mar 1: Gamba Osaka (Jap) 5 Melbourne Victory (Aus) 1; Jeju United (SKo) 0 Tianjin Teda (Chn) 1.
Mar 15: Melbourne Victory 1 Jeju United 2; Tianjin Teda 2 Gamba Osaka 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tianjin	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Gamba	2	1	0	1	6	3	3
Jeju	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Melbourne V	2	0	0	2	2	7	0

Group F

Mar 1: Hangzhou Greentown (Chn) 2 Nagoya Grampus (Jap) 0.
Mar 2: Al Ain (UAE) 0 Seoul (SKo) 1.
Mar 15: Seoul 3 Hangzhou Greentown 0.

Unbeaten...Al Jazira are still yet to lose a game in the league

striker Bare and Ricardo Oliveira earning them a 2-2 draw away to city rivals and defending champions Al Wahda in their last outing.

NEW ZEALAND

Pearce tops charts

Allan Pearce scored both goals as Waitakere United ended the regular season in first place following their 2-1 victory away to Otago United. Pearce finished the campaign as top scorer with 13 goals.

SAMOA

Long wait finally over

Kiwi SC won the national league title for the first time in 14 years, finishing five points clear of defending champions Moaula United, who they beat twice during the season.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Seoul	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Hangzhou	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Al Ain	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Nagoya	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Group G

Mar 2: Cerezo Osaka (Jap) 2 Arema (Ins) 1; Jeonbuk Motors (SKo) 1 Shandong Luneng (Chn) 0.
Mar 16: Arema 0 Jeonbuk Motors 4; Shandong Luneng 2 Cerezo Osaka 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jeonbuk	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Shandong	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Cerezo	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Arema	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

Group H

Mar 2: Shanghai Shenhua (Chn) 0 Kashima Antlers (Jap) 0; Sydney (Aus) 0 Suwon Bluewings (SKo) 0.
Mar 16: Suwon Bluewings 4 Shanghai Shenhua 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Suwon	2	1	1	0	4	0	4
Kashima	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sydney	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Shanghai	2	0	1	1	0	4	1

Top 2 in each group qualify for 1st knockout round

AUSTRALIA

Championship play-offs

Preliminary final

Mar 5: Central Coast 1 Gold Coast 0.
Central Coast qualified for Grand Final

Grand Final

Mar 13 - Brisbane (Suncorp)
Brisbane 2 (Henrique 117, Paartalu 120)
Central Coast 2 (Kwasnik 96, Bozanic 103)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 50,168. **Ref:** Breeze
Brisbane 4-2 on pens

JAPAN

Mar 5: Avispa 0 Albirex 3; Sanfrecce 0 Vegalta 0; Gamba 2 Cerezo 1; Nagoya 1 Yokohama 1; Ventforet 0 Jubilo 1; Kawasaki 2 Montedio 0; Kashiwa 3 Shimizu 0.
Mar 6: Vissel 1 Urawa 0; Kashima 3 Omiya 3.

JAPAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Albirex	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Kashiwa	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Kawasaki	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Gamba	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Jubilo	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Vissel	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Kashima	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
Omiya	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
Nagoya	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Yokohama	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Sanfrecce	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Vegalta	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Cerezo	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Urawa	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Ventforet	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Montedio	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Avispa	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
Shimizu	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

SOUTH KOREA

Regular season

Mar 5: Gwangju 3 Daegu 2; Sangju 2 Incheon 0; Pohang 1 Seongnam 1; Gangwon 0 Gyeongnam 1.
Mar 6: Seoul 0 Suwon 2; Ulsan 1 Daejeon 2; Jeonbuk 0 Chunnam 1; Jeju 2 Busan 1.
Mar 12: Daejeon 1 Seoul 1; Seongnam 0 Jeonbuk 1; Incheon 0 Jeju 0; Suwon 2 Gwangju 1.
Mar 13: Busan 3 Sangju 3; Daegu 1 Gangwon 0; Chunnam 0 Pohang 1; Gyeongnam 1 Ulsan 0.
Mar 20: Chunnam 3 Seoul 0; Seongnam 2 Sangju 3; Ulsan 2 Gwangju 1; Daejeon 2 Gyeongnam 0; Incheon 1 Daegu 1; Jeju 1 Gangwon 0; Jeonbuk 5 Busan 2; Pohang 2 Suwon 0.

SOUTH KOREA – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sangju	3	2	1	0	8	5	7
Daejeon	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Pohang	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Jeju	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Jeonbuk	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Chunnam	3	2	0	1	4	1	6
Suwon	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Gyeongnam	3	2	0	1	2	2	6
Daegu	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Gwangju	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
Ulsan	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
Incheon	3	0	2	1	1	3	2
Seongnam	3	0	1	2	3	5	1
Busan	3	0	1	2	6	10	1
Seoul	3	0	1	2	1	6	1
Gangwon	3	0	0	3	0	3	0

30-round regular season (15x2); top 6 will enter championship play-offs

OCEANIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Feb 5: Amicale (Van) 3 Hekari United (PNG) 3; Lautoka (Fij) 1 Koloale (Sol) 6.
Feb 26: Amicale 5 Lautoka 1; Koloale 2 Hekari United 1.
Mar 19: Hekari United 1 Lautoka 1; Koloale 1 Amicale 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Amicale	6	3	1	2	12	7	10
Koloale	6	3	0	3	10	10	9
Lautoka	6	2	2	2	6	13	8
Hekari	6	1	3	2	10	8	6

Group B

Feb 4: Tefana (Tah) 3 Waitakere United (NZ) 1.
Feb 21: Magenta (NC) 0 Auckland City (NZ) 1.
Feb 25: Tefana 0 Magenta 3.
Feb 27: Auckland City 1 Waitakere United 0.
Mar 19: Auckland City 5 Tefana 0; Waitakere United 2 Magenta 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Auckland	6	4	2	0	12	2	14
Waitakere	6	2	2	2	8	8	8
Magenta	6	2	1	3	6	7	7
Tefana	6	1	1	4	5	14	4

Group winners qualified for Final

NEW ZEALAND

Regular season

Feb 11: Waikato 1 Canterbury 0.
Feb 12: Waitakere 1 Hawkes Bay 2; Otago 4 YoungHeart 3.
Feb 13: Auckland 2 Team Wellington 0.
Feb 19: Waitakere 6 Waikato 1.
Feb 20: Canterbury 3 Otago 1; Team Wellington 1 Hawkes Bay 3.
Mar 2: YoungHeart 1 Auckland 2.
Mar 6: Team Wellington 2 YoungHeart 2; Hawkes Bay 1 Waikato 1; Otago 1 Waitakere 2.
Mar 10: Auckland 0 Canterbury 1.

NEW ZEALAND – REGULAR – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Waitakere	14	12	0	2	39	12	36
Auckland	14	9	3	2	29	12	30
T Wellington	14	7	2	5	28	23	23
Canterbury	14	6	2	6	20	19	20
Hawkes Bay	14	5	4	5	18	22	19
Waikato	14	4	3	7	21	33	15
Otago	14	3	3	8	15	30	12
YoungHeart	14	1	1	12	19	38	4

Top 4 entered championship play-offs; no relegation from this league

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

May 3-4
UEFA Champions League semi-finals second leg
May 3-5
Libertadores Cup round of 16 second leg
May 5
Europa League semi-finals second leg
May 10-11
AFC Champions League final group matches
May 10-12
Libertadores Cup quarter-finals first leg
May 14
Bundesliga final round of matches; English and French Cup Finals
May 17-19
Libertadores Cup quarter-finals second leg
May 18
Europa League Final
May 21
German Cup Final: Duisburg v Schalke; Brazilian championship starts
May 22
La Liga, Premier League and Serie A final round of matches
May 24-25
AFC Champions League round of 16; Libertadores Cup semi-finals first leg
May 28
UEFA Champions League Final
May 29
Ligue 1 last matches; Italian Cup Final

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AMERICA (MEX)

GOALKEEPERS		
25	Hugo GONZALEZ	01.08.90
12	Armando NAVARRETE	22.11.80
1	Francisco OCHOA	13.07.85
DEFENDERS		
16	Diego Alberto CERVANTES	30.08.84
15	Rodrigo INIGO	29.08.85
19	Miguel LAYUN	25.06.88
3	Aquivaldo MOSQUERA (Col)	22.06.81
4	Oscar ROJAS	02.08.81
2	Patricio TREVINO	28.12.89
6	Juan Carlos VALENZUELA	15.05.84
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Rosinei ADOLFO (Bra)	03.05.83
20	Renato GONZALEZ	04.10.88
8	Israel MARTINEZ	14.03.81
23	Jose MARTINEZ	22.02.87
7	Andres OLIVERA (Uru)	30.05.78
13	Pavel PARDO	26.07.76
14	Diego Antonio REYES	19.09.92
21	Alfredo TENA	28.04.85
FORWARDS		
9	Enrique ESQUEDA	19.04.88
17	Antonio LOPEZ	18.05.89
24	Daniel MARQUEZ	18.01.86
10	Daniel MONTENEGRO (Arg)	28.03.79
18	Angel REYNA	19.09.84
11	Vicente SANCHEZ (Uru)	07.12.79
22	Vicente Matias VUOSO	03.11.81
COACH		
	Carlos REINOSO (Chl)	07.03.46

ARGENTINOS JUNIORS (ARG)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Juan CARRERA	10.05.81
20	Nicolas NAVARRO	25.03.85
1	Luis OJEDA	21.03.90
DEFENDERS		
13	Nicolas BERARDO	26.07.90
6	Sergio ESCUDERO	12.04.83
2	Santiago GENTILETTI	09.01.85
25	Federico PISTONE	13.06.90
3	Gonzalo PROSPERI	03.06.85
5	Lucas RODRIGUEZ	27.09.93
17	Juan Alberto SABIA	17.12.81
4	Miguel TORREN	12.08.88
MIDFIELDERS		
24	German BASUALDO	07.03.84
7	Mauro BOGADO	31.05.85
23	Emilio HERNANDEZ (Chl)	14.09.84
16	Pedro Pablo HERNANDEZ	24.10.86
14	Matias LABA	11.12.91
8	Juan MERCIER	02.02.80
18	Cristian SANCHEZ PRETTE	10.05.85
FORWARDS		
11	Nicolas BLANDI	13.01.90
22	Franco NIELL	22.05.83
10	Gustavo OBERMAN	25.03.85
19	Ciro RIUS	27.10.88
15	Andres ROMERO	21.12.89
21	Santiago SALCEDO (Par)	06.09.81
9	Gonzalo VARGAS (Uru)	22.09.81
COACH		
	Pedro TROGLIO	28.07.65

CARACAS (VEN)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Alain BAROJA	23.10.89
23	David GONZALEZ	24.03.85
25	Renny VEGA	04.07.79
DEFENDERS		
14	Henry BAUTISTA	29.08.83
2	Rohel BRICENO	15.03.84
6	Jaime BUSTAMANTE	21.04.80
5	Pablo CAMACHO	12.12.90
20	Alexander GONZALEZ	13.09.92
22	Julio MACHADO	19.06.82
4	Victor NAZARIO (Uru)	12.01.83
15	Edder PEREZ	03.07.83
19	Giovanny ROMERO	01.01.84
MIDFIELDERS		
21	Nelson BARAHONA (Pan)	22.11.87
7	Cesar GONZALEZ	10.10.87
16	Juan GUERRA	16.02.87
8	Edgar JIMENEZ	19.10.84
13	Franklin LUCENA	20.02.81
17	Josef MARTINEZ	18.05.93
3	Romulo OTERO	28.04.82
10	Louis PENA	25.12.89
11	Carlos SUAREZ	09.11.92
FORWARDS		
18	Luis CABEZAS (Col)	03.03.86
12	Daniel FEBLES	08.02.91
9	Edwarz JIMENEZ (Col)	14.07.81
24	Anthony URIBE	24.10.90
COACH		
	Ceferino BENCOMO	01.11.70

CERRO PORTENO (PAR)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Diego BARRETO	16.07.81
25	Pablo GAVILAN	18.07.89
1	Sergio VALINOTTI	01.04.83
DEFENDERS		
2	Cesar Ivan BENITEZ	22.05.90
4	Pedro Juan BENITEZ	23.03.81
15	Luis CARDOZO	10.10.88
18	Lautaro FORMICA (Arg)	27.01.86
13	David MENDOZA	10.05.85
3	Danilo ORTIZ	28.07.92
5	Ivan PIRIS	10.03.89
22	Mariano UGLESSICH (Arg)	06.11.81
MIDFIELDERS		
6	Rodrigo BURGOS	21.06.89
8	Luis CACERES	16.04.88
10	Julio DOS SANTOS	07.05.83
17	Jonathan FABBRO	16.01.82
21	Francisco Javier GARCIA	04.04.91
16	Jorge NINEZ	22.09.84
24	Jorge ROJAS	07.01.93
14	Javier VILLARREAL (Arg)	01.03.79
FORWARDS		
9	Fredy BAREIRO	27.03.82
7	Juan Manuel LUCERO	26.05.85
11	Diego MADRIGAL	19.03.89
20	Juan MALDONADO	18.05.90
19	Roberto NANNI (Arg)	20.08.81
23	Oscar ROMERO	04.07.92
COACH		
	Leonardo ASTRADA (Arg)	06.01.70

COLO COLO (CHL)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Guillermo CASTILLO (Uru)	17.04.78
12	Raul OLIVARES	14.04.88
25	Francisco PRIETO	01.07.83
DEFENDERS		
6	Agustin ALAYES (Arg)	22.07.78
4	Nelson CABRERA (Par)	22.04.83
2	Paulo MAGALHAES	14.12.89
3	Luis MENA	28.08.79
21	Johan MUNOZ	20.05.89
19	Andres SCOTTI (Uru)	14.12.75
5	Sebastian TORO	02.02.90
MIDFIELDERS		
17	Jose CABION	14.11.83
13	Jose FUENZALIDA	22.02.85
16	Patricio JEREZ	19.05.85
10	Cristobal JORQUERA	04.08.88
15	Marco MEDEL	30.06.89
14	Ezequiel MILLAR	03.11.81
20	Alvaro ORMENO	04.04.79
23	Luis PAVEZ	25.06.88
24	Jose SALCEDO (Par)	11.09.83
18	Daniel WILCHEZ (Arg)	31.08.83
FORWARDS		
9	Daud GAZALE	10.08.84
11	Ezequiel MIRALLES (Arg)	21.07.83
7	Esteban PAREDES	01.08.80
22	Diego RUBIO	15.05.93
8	Mario SALGADO	03.06.81
COACH		
	Americo GALLEGO (Arg)	25.04.55

CRUZEIRO (BRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	FABIO	30.09.80
24	GABRIEL	27.09.92
12	RAFAEL	23.06.89
DEFENDERS		
6	DIEGO RENAN	26.01.90
21	EDCARLOS	10.05.85
22	FABRICIO	20.02.90
3	GIL	12.06.87
13	LEO	30.01.88
2	PABLO	03.08.88
20	ROMULO	22.05.87
4	Mauricio VICTORINO (Uru)	11.10.82
MIDFIELDERS		
18	DUDU	07.01.92
14	EVERTON	08.08.84
7	GILBERTO	25.04.76
8	HENRIQUE	16.05.85
15	Leandro GUERREIRO	17.11.78
5	MARQUINHOS PARANA	20.07.77
17	ROGER	17.08.78
FORWARDS		
25	ANDRE DIAS	11.03.81
19	Ernesto FARIAS (Arg)	29.05.80
10	Walter MONTILLO (Arg)	14.04.84
23	Jose ORTIGOZA (Par)	01.04.87
11	Thiago RIBEIRO	24.02.86
16	WALLYSON	17.10.88
9	Wellington PAULISTA	22.04.83
COACH		
	CUCA	07.06.63

DEPORTES TOLIMA (COL)

GOALKEEPERS		
22	Alejandro BOTERO	10.08.80
1	Janer SERPA	12.02.81
12	Antony SILVA (Par)	27.02.84
DEFENDERS		
5	Yair ARRECHEA	08.11.80
23	Wilmer DIAZ	23.06.78
2	Julian HURTADO	24.11.79
3	Yesid MARTINEZ	02.01.80
20	Davinson MONSALVE	09.06.84
24	Felix NOGUERA	31.03.87
18	Marlon PIEDRAHITA	13.06.85
6	Gerardo VALLEJO	03.12.76
MIDFIELDERS		
4	Hamilton Alexander ACUNA	23.07.90
8	Gustavo BOLIVAR	16.04.85
14	Mike CAMPAZ	16.11.87
21	Diego CHARA	05.04.86
7	Luis Alberto CLOSA (Par)	10.03.84
25	Jhon Fredy HURTADO	23.03.85
17	Christian MARRUGO	18.07.85
10	Elkin MURILLO	20.09.77
FORWARDS		
13	Rafael CASTILLO	06.06.80
9	Roberto GAMARRA (Par)	11.05.81
11	Pablo Junior GIMENEZ (Par)	29.06.81
19	Wilder MEDINA	21.02.81
15	Wilmer PARRA	08.10.83
16	Danny SANTOYA	24.04.88
COACH		
	Hernan TORRES	18.02.61

DEPORTIVO TACHIRA (VEN)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Roberts RIVAS	05.12.80
2	Richard RUIZ	28.07.88
1	Manuel SANHOUSE	16.07.75
DEFENDERS		
4	Wilker ANGEL	18.03.93
18	Gerzon CHACON	27.10.80
25	Jackson CLAVIJO	01.01.92
15	Walter MORENO (Col)	18.05.78
13	Jhon OSPINA	06.06.86
6	Jackson ROMERO	11.10.83
20	Enrique RONGA	02.03.82
3	Jose YEGUEZ	16.09.87
23	Layneker ZAFRA	23.05.86
MIDFIELDERS		
14	Jorge CASANOVA	06.07.84
17	Oswaldo CHAURANT	27.05.84
8	Pedro FERNANDEZ	27.07.77
16	Cesar GONZALEZ	21.06.90
5	Diego GUERRERO	26.06.86
22	Sebastian HERNANDEZ (Col)	02.10.86
10	Jose PARRA	06.02.90
FORWARDS		
11	Anderson ARIAS	20.04.87
24	Jose COLMENARES	28.02.88
7	Yonathan DEL VALLE	28.05.90
19	Julio Brian GUTIERREZ (Chl)	14.09.79
9	Sergio HERRERA (Col)	15.03.81
21	Edgar PEREZ	16.02.82
COACH		
	Jorge Luis PINTO (Col)	16.12.52

EMELEC (ECU)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Jose AYOVI	17.05.89
22	Javier KLIMOWICZ	10.03.77
1	Wilmer ZUMBA	18.12.78
DEFENDERS		
23	Gabriel ACHILIER	24.03.85
16	Oscar BAGUI	10.12.82
9	Silvano ESTACIO	16.12.81
19	Marcelo FLEITAS	01.09.73
4	Fulton FRANCIS	22.03.85
6	Carlos Andres QUINONEZ	18.08.80
15	Pedro QUINONEZ	04.03.86
MIDFIELDERS		
3	Armando ANGULO	20.11.85
18	Marcos CAICEDO	10.11.91
2	Fernando GAIBOR	08.10.91
24	Fernando GIMENEZ (Par)	10.07.84
13	Angel MENA	21.01.88
11	Edison MENDEZ	13.03.79
21	Cristian Matias MENENDEZ (Arg)	02.04.88
25	Eduardo MORANTE	01.06.87
5	Jose Luis QUINONEZ	29.05.84
7	Mario QUIROZ	08.09.82
10	Leandro Gabriel TORRES (Arg)	04.11.88
8	Polo WILA	04.02.87
FORWARDS		
17	Walter IZA	02.08.81
20	Eial STRAHMAN (Arg)	21.06.89
14	Enner VALENCIA	04.11.89
COACH		
Omar ASAD (Arg)		09.04.71

ESTUDIANTES (ARG)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Agustin ORION	26.06.81
25	Agustin SILVA	28.06.89
12	Cesar TABORDA	23.01.84
DEFENDERS		
24	Nelson BENITEZ	24.05.84
2	Leandro DESABATO	24.01.79
17	Federico FERNANDEZ	21.02.89
19	Dylan GISSI	27.04.91
4	Raul IBERBIA	25.12.89
14	Gabriel MERCADO	18.03.87
16	German RE	02.11.81
3	Facundo RONCAGLIA	10.02.87
MIDFIELDERS		
6	Pablo BARRIENTOS	17.01.85
23	Leandro BENITEZ	05.04.81
22	Rodrigo BRANA	07.03.79
13	Michael HOYOS	02.08.91
21	Gabriel PENALBA	23.09.84
7	Enzo PEREZ	22.02.86
5	Matias SANCHEZ	18.08.87
15	Dario STEFANATTO	03.04.85
11	Juan Sebastian VERON	09.03.75
FORWARDS		
10	Gaston FERNANDEZ	12.10.83
20	Leandro GONZALEZ	14.10.85
9	Hernan Rodrigo LOPEZ (Uru)	21.01.78
18	Maximiliano NUNEZ	17.09.86
8	Juan Pablo PEREYRA	30.05.84
COACH		
Eduardo BERIZZO		13.11.69

FLUMINENSE (BRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	BERNA	11.06.79
1	DIEGO CAVALIERI	01.12.82
22	RAFAEL	24.03.84
DEFENDERS		
15	ANDRE LUIS	31.07.79
6	CARLINHOS	23.01.87
13	DIGAO	07.05.88
5	EDINHO	15.01.83
3	GUM	04.01.86
16	JULIO CESAR	15.06.82
4	LEANDRO EUZEBIO	18.08.81
2	MARIANO	23.06.86
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Dario Leonardo CONCA (Arg)	11.05.83
20	DECO	27.08.77
8	DIGUINHO	20.03.83
23	FERNANDO BOB	07.01.88
7	MARQUINHOS	03.07.86
21	SOUZA	04.02.79
17	Edwin Armando VALENCIA (Col)	29.03.85
14	WILLIANS	22.05.88
FORWARDS		
25	ARAUJO	08.08.77
10	EMERSON	06.12.78
9	FRED	03.10.83
19	RAFAEL MOURA	23.05.83
18	RODRIGUINHO (Per)	02.02.83
24	TARTA	13.04.89
COACH		
(vacant)		-

GODOY CRUZ (ARG)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Nelson IBANEZ	13.01.81
16	Sebastian MOYANO	26.08.90
12	Sebastian TORRICO	22.02.80
DEFENDERS		
13	Victor AGUILERA	11.06.89
22	Lucas CEBALLOS	03.01.87
20	Emir FACCIOLI	05.08.89
21	Zelmar GARCIA	03.02.87
3	Roberto RUSSO	06.06.82
25	Nicolas SANCHEZ	04.02.86
2	Leonardo SIGALI	29.05.87
6	German VOBORIL	05.05.87
MIDFIELDERS		
14	Israel DAMONTE	06.01.82
10	Mariano DONDA	25.03.82
24	Juan Carlos FALCON	19.11.79
15	Gabriel MOYANO	28.07.92
5	Nicolas OLMEDO	10.03.83
23	Ariel ROJAS	16.01.86
4	Carlos SANCHEZ (Uru)	02.12.84
17	Adrian TORRES	31.10.89
8	Diego VILLAR	25.04.81
FORWARDS		
19	Pablo MIRANDA	14.12.84
11	Alvaro NAVARRO (Uru)	28.01.85
7	Fabricio NUNEZ (Uru)	04.11.85
18	Ruben RAMIREZ	17.10.82
9	Rodrigo SALINAS	04.07.86
COACH		
Jorge DA SILVA (Uru)		11.12.62

GREMIO (BRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	MARCELO	13.01.87
20	MATHEUS	05.05.89
1	VICTOR	21.01.83
DEFENDERS		
23	BRUNO COLLACO	08.03.90
2	GABRIEL	05.06.81
16	DIEGO CLEMENTINO	18.03.84
6	GILSON	14.05.86
11	LUCIO	14.05.86
13	MARIO FERNANDES	19.09.90
15	NEUTON	14.03.90
3	PAULAO	25.02.86
4	RAFAEL MARQUES	21.09.83
25	RODOLFO	23.10.82
14	VILSON	03.04.88
MIDFIELDERS		
8	ADILSON	16.01.87
22	CARLOS ALBERTO	11.12.84
10	DOUGLAS	18.02.82
24	Damian ESCUDERO (Arg)	20.04.87
5	FABIO ROCHEMBACK	10.12.81
17	FERNANDO	03.03.92
18	MAYLSON	06.03.89
7	VINICIUS PACHECO	27.09.85
FORWARDS		
21	ANDRE LIMA	03.05.85
9	BORGES	05.10.80
19	JUNIOR VICOSA	24.07.89
COACH		
RENATO GAUCHO		09.09.62

GUARANI (PAR)

GOALKEEPERS		
25	Alfredo AGUILAR	18.07.88
1	Pablo AURRECOCHEA (Uru)	08.03.81
12	Joel SILVA	13.01.89
DEFENDERS		
2	Tomas BARTOMEUS	27.02.82
13	Francisco Joel BENITEZ	26.02.84
22	Federico CARBALLO	14.03.80
4	Eduardo FILIPPINI	05.07.83
14	Ignacio ITHURRALDE	30.05.83
3	Elvis MARECOS	15.02.80
19	Micael MODINGER	06.06.86
MIDFIELDERS		
20	Juan AGUILAR	24.06.89
8	Pedro CHAVEZ	29.06.85
17	Luis DE LA CRUZ	23.03.91
10	Osvaldo HOBECKER	23.03.84
6	Jorge MENDOZA (Arg)	04.06.91
5	Angel ORTIZ	27.12.77
16	Miguel Angel PANIAGUA	14.05.87
21	Cristian SOSA	08.08.87
15	Fabian STARK	14.05.87
FORWARDS		
23	Julian BENITEZ	06.06.87
11	Pablo CABALLERO (Arg)	27.07.86
9	Fabio ESCOBAR	15.02.82
7	Hugo NOTARIO	15.03.80
18	Luis OVELAR	08.06.83
24	Pablo VRANJICAN (Arg)	11.12.85
COACH		
Felix LEON		02.05.62

INDEPENDIENTE (ARG)

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Fabian ASSMANN	23.03.86
12	Adrian GABBARINI	10.10.85
1	Hilario NAVARRO	14.11.80
DEFENDERS		
14	Ignacio BARCIA	15.06.89
3	Lucas MAREQUE	12.01.83
25	Carlos MATHEU	13.05.85
6	Eduardo TUZZIO	31.07.74
2	Julian VELAZQUEZ	23.10.90
4	Maximiliano VELAZQUEZ	12.09.80
13	Ivan VELEZ (Col)	16.08.84
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Roberto BATTION	01.03.82
16	Nicolas CABRERA	05.06.84
8	Hernan FREDES	27.03.87
15	Fernando GODOY	01.05.90
19	Leandro GRACIAN	06.08.82
23	Federico MANCUELLO	26.03.89
7	Cristian PELLERANO	01.02.82
22	Ivan PEREZ	23.05.90
10	Patricio RODRIGUEZ	04.05.90
FORWARDS		
9	Matias DEFEDERICO	23.08.89
20	Alberto Martin GOMEZ	26.01.83
18	Nicolas MARTINEZ	25.09.87
24	Brian NIEVA	19.04.90
17	Facundo PARRA	15.06.85
11	Andres SILVERA	14.03.77
COACH		
Antonio MOHAMED		02.04.70

INTERNACIONAL (BRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	LAURO	03.09.80
22	MURIEL	14.02.87
12	RENAN	24.01.85
DEFENDERS		
2	BOLIVAR	16.08.80
19	DANIEL	14.09.90
3	INDIO	14.02.75
15	JUAN	10.06.91
6	KLEBER	01.04.80
4	NEI	06.12.85
21	RODRIGO BALDASSO	27.08.80
14	Gonzalo SORONDO (Uru)	09.10.79
MIDFIELDERS		
17	ANDREZINHO	30.07.83
24	Mario BOLATTI (Arg)	17.02.85
10	Andres D'ALESSANDRO (Arg)	15.04.81
13	GLAYDSON	20.06.79
16	OSCAR	09.09.91
7	TINGA	13.01.78
5	Pablo Horacio UINAZU (Arg)	26.08.78
8	WILSON MATIAS	14.09.83
23	ZE ROBERTO	09.12.80
FORWARDS		
20	ALECSSANDRO	04.02.81
25	ALEX	20.05.90
18	Fernando CAVENAGHI (Arg)	21.09.83
9	LEANDRO DAMIAO	22.07.89
11	RAFAEL SOBIS	17.06.85
COACH		
Celso ROTH		30.11.57

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JAGUARES (MEX)

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Gerardo Daniel RUIZ	05.09.85
1	Jorge VILLALPANDO	13.03.85
12	Fabian VILLASENOR	20.11.82
DEFENDERS		
15	Marvin CABRERA	01.05.80
3	Jesus Roberto CHAVEZ	26.04.86
16	Jaime DURAN	02.12.81
5	Omar Alejandro FLORES	06.05.79
4	Ismael FUENTES (Chl)	04.08.81
2	Miguel Angel MARTINEZ (Arg)	19.01.84
7	Oscar Francisco RAZO	09.04.84
11	Guillermo ROJAS	29.03.83
22	Hugo SANCHEZ	08.05.81
MIDFIELDERS		
19	Edgar ANDRADE	02.03.88
18	Luis ESQUEDA	25.02.81
24	Jorge Daniel HERNANDEZ	10.06.89
10	Damian MANSO (Arg)	06.06.79
13	Jorge Marcelo RODRIGUEZ (Uru)	13.01.85
17	Jose Hiber RUIZ	31.01.80
14	Francisco Javier TORRES	15.05.83
6	Christian de Jesus VALDEZ	05.05.84
8	Alan Miguel ZAMORA	08.04.85
FORWARDS		
25	Julio Daniel FRIAS	29.03.79
9	Jackson MARTINEZ (Col)	03.10.86
20	Antonio PEDROZA	20.02.91
23	Antonio SALAZAR	07.02.89
COACH		
Jose Guadalupe CRUZ		22.11.67

JORGE WILSTERMANN (BOL)

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Dennis CARTAGENA	17.09.87
1	Mauro MACHADO (Bra)	22.01.75
12	Roberto Carlos RIVAS	09.06.85
DEFENDERS		
16	Diego BENGOLEA	07.12.79
14	Juan Ignacio BROWN (Arg)	30.09.77
2	Marcelo CARBALLO	07.12.74
3	Jusselio DA SILVA (Bra)	21.05.83
4	Lucas FERNANDEZ (Arg)	20.07.88
22	Sergio GARZON	16.02.91
25	Daniel TABOADA	06.06.90
18	Luis ZAPATA (Col)	24.04.80
MIDFIELDERS		
7	Gregorio ABREGU (Arg)	09.09.89
10	Luis Gabriel GARCIA (Arg)	05.06.88
20	Edson HINOJOSA	02.03.92
15	Cristhian MACHADO	20.06.90
6	Victor Hugo MELGAR	28.02.88
11	Nicolas MOSQUERA (Col)	18.05.88
17	Juan Carlos OJEDA (Arg)	23.08.88
5	Ramiro RODRIGUEZ (Arg)	03.08.87
8	Amilcar SANCHEZ	23.01.91
13	Nicolas TORRES (Arg)	01.06.87
23	Iani Martin VERON (Arg)	21.06.86
FORWARDS		
19	Oliver FERNANDEZ	14.10.83
9	Fabio LIMA DE CAMPOS (Bra)	29.03.88
24	Jesus Daniel TOSCANINI (Uru)	11.12.87
COACH		
Marcelo NEVELEFF (Arg)		-

JUNIOR (COL)

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Wanerge DELGADO	10.01.89
12	Carlos RODRIGUEZ	07.05.83
1	Mario Sebastian VIERA (Uru)	07.03.83
DEFENDERS		
3	Anselmo DE ALMEIDA (Bra)	18.08.80
22	Cesar FAWCETT	12.08.84
17	Braynner GARCIA	06.09.86
18	Harold MACIAS	12.06.80
2	Armando NIEVES	14.11.89
4	Sergio OTALVARO	10.12.86
23	Jose Jaider ROMERO	22.05.82
5	Jhon VALENCIA	04.01.82
6	Juan VALENCIA	15.01.86
MIDFIELDERS		
13	Jose AMAYA	16.07.80
8	Julian BARAHONA	08.03.78
14	Wainer CANEDA	18.10.89
10	Giovanni HERNANDEZ	16.06.76
16	Vladimir HERNANDEZ	08.02.89
19	Jossimar JOSSIMAR	13.08.87
9	Seherman SHERMAN	07.08.89
15	Jhon VIAFARA	27.10.78
FORWARDS		
24	Fredys ARRIETA	20.08.85
20	Carlos BACCA	08.09.86
25	Victor CORTES	26.02.76
7	Alfredo PADILLA	29.07.89
11	Luis PAEZ	27.10.86
COACH		
Hector Oscar QUINTABANI (Arg)		04.06.50

LDU QUITO (ECU)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Jose Francisco CEVALLOS	25.09.71
22	Alexander DOMINGUEZ	05.06.87
25	Daniel VITERI	12.12.81
DEFENDERS		
5	Paul AMBROSSI	14.10.80
2	Norberto ARAUJO (Arg)	13.10.78
3	Geovanny CAICEDO	28.03.81
4	Ulises DE LA CRUZ	08.02.74
17	Enrique GAMEZ	13.07.81
12	Marlon GANCHOZO	21.02.91
6	Jorge GUAGUA	28.09.81
23	Erwin MOREIRA	15.06.87
13	Neicer REASCO	23.07.77
24	Jose Luis VALENCIA	19.03.82
MIDFIELDERS		
15	William ARAUJO	05.06.79
10	Luis Alberto BOLANOS	27.03.85
14	Diego CALDERON	26.10.86
19	Jose Francisco CEVALLOS	18.01.95
11	Ezequiel GONZALEZ (Arg)	10.07.80
18	Fernando HIDALGO	20.05.85
8	Patricio URRUTIA	15.10.78
20	Enrique VERA (Par)	10.03.79
FORWARDS		
16	Hernan BARCOS (Arg)	11.04.84
7	Miler BOLANOS	01.06.90
9	Walter CALDERON	17.10.77
21	Carlos LUNA (Arg)	17.01.82
COACH		
Edgardo BAUZA (Arg)		26.01.58

LEON (PER)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Sebastian CUERDO (Arg)	16.07.86
21	Juan Angel FLORES	25.02.76
1	Renzo LOBRANO	01.05.90
DEFENDERS		
3	Jorge Martin ARAUJO	30.11.79
18	Roller CAMBINDO (Col)	22.10.78
2	Luia Felipe CARDOZA	19.12.84
22	Jair CESPEDES	22.05.84
8	Jose Adalberto CUERO (Col)	30.03.90
25	Gianfranco ESPINOZA	28.08.86
13	Giuliano PORTILLA	25.05.73
4	Guillermo SALAS	21.10.74
15	Renato ZAPATA	16.02.92
MIDFIELDERS		
6	Miguel Angel CEVASCO	27.04.86
24	Ever CHAVEZ	28.12.84
5	Jean Franco FERRARI	29.07.75
10	Jose Harrison OTALVARO (Col)	28.02.86
23	Victor PENA	14.10.87
19	Edwin PEREZ	28.09.74
20	Carlos Alberto ZEGARRA	02.03.77
FORWARDS		
14	Carlos ELIAS	23.03.88
11	Juan Diego GONZALES VIGIL	18.02.85
16	Alfredo GUZMAN	02.12.90
17	Jorge LEIVA	29.01.81
7	Carlos OREJUELA	04.04.80
9	Orlando RODRIGUEZ (Pan)	09.08.84
COACH		
Franco NAVARRO		10.11.61

LIBERTAD (PAR)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Jose BOGARIN	08.03.90
25	Bernardo MEDINA	14.01.88
12	Tobias VARGAS	21.08.89
DEFENDERS		
11	Carlos BONET	02.10.77
22	Ignacio CANUTO (Arg)	20.02.86
4	Gustavo MENCIA	05.07.88
13	Aldo OLMEDO	25.09.89
2	Pedro Paulo PORTOCARRERO	13.05.77
15	Miguel Angel SAMUDIO	24.08.86
14	Pedro SARABIA	05.07.75
3	Arnaldo VERA	22.01.80
MIDFIELDERS		
17	Rodrigo ALBORNO	12.08.93
16	Sergio AQUINO	21.09.79
5	Víctor AYALA	01.01.88
18	Víctor CACERES	25.03.85
7	Víctor Hugo DAVALOS	03.02.91
8	Jorge Daniel GONZALEZ	25.03.88
6	Omar POUSO (Uru)	28.02.80
FORWARDS		
23	Rodolfo GAMARRA	10.12.88
20	Manuel MACIEL	12.02.84
24	Jose NUNEZ	12.09.88
9	Angel ORUE	05.01.89
21	Nicolas PAVLOVICH (Arg)	14.02.78
10	Juan Rodrigo ROJAS	09.04.88
19	Nelson ROMERO	18.11.84
COACH		
Gregorio PEREZ (Uru)		16.01.48

NACIONAL (URU)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Leonardo BURIAN	21.01.84
25	Rodrigo MUNOZ	22.01.82
12	Martín TEJERA	16.02.91
DEFENDERS		
19	Sebastian COATES	07.10.90
18	Gonzalo GODOY	17.01.88
2	Alejandro LEMBO	15.02.78
4	Christian NUNEZ	24.09.82
3	Jadson VIERA (Bra)	04.08.81
6	Nicolas VIGNERI	06.07.83
MIDFIELDERS		
8	Matias CABRERA	16.05.86
17	Maximiliano CALZADA	21.04.90
7	Jonathan CHARQUERO	21.02.89
21	Flavio CORDOBA (Col)	04.10.84
13	Gabriel MARQUES (Bra)	04.03.88
22	Mauricio PEREYRA	15.03.90
23	Facundo PIRIZ	27.03.90
5	Anderson SILVA (Bra)	28.08.82
15	Tabare VIUDEZ	08.09.89
FORWARDS		
16	Carlos DUTRA (Bra)	19.07.87
14	Robert FLORES	13.05.86
9	Bruno FORNAROLI	07.09.87
20	Santiago GARCIA	14.09.90
10	Marcelo GALLARDO (Arg)	18.01.76
11	Horacio PERALTA	03.06.82
24	Richard PORTA	01.08.83
COACH		
Juan Ramon CARRASCO		15.09.56

ONCE CALDAS (COL)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Juan HENAO	30.12.71
12	Jorge LENIS	25.10.86
25	Luis MARTINEZ	11.07.82
DEFENDERS		
5	Diego AMAYA	10.11.85
4	Elkin CALLE	26.05.80
23	Jefferson CUERO	15.05.88
15	Oliver FULA	01.03.88
3	Alexis HENRIQUEZ	01.02.83
16	Luis NUNEZ	10.12.83
24	Yedinson PALACIOS	16.01.87
19	Carlos RAMIREZ	01.05.88
MIDFIELDERS		
14	Diego ARANGO	02.07.80
10	Víctor CORDOBA	08.11.87
20	Mario GONZALES	25.08.83
6	Harrison HENAO	19.02.87
9	Yesinguer JIMENEZ	13.01.91
13	Alexander MEJIA	11.07.88
11	Claudio MIRABAJE (Uru)	06.03.89
8	Arnulfo VALENTIERRA	16.08.74
FORWARDS		
7	Carlos CARBONERO	25.07.90
21	Wilson MENA	02.07.87
2	Felix MICOLTA	30.11.89
17	Dayro MORENO	16.09.85
22	Jhon PAJOY	10.11.88
18	Wason RENTERIA	04.07.85
COACH		
Juan Carlos OSORIO		08.06.62

ORIENTE PETROLERO (BOL)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Alex ARANCIBIA	28.01.90
22	Michael ETULAIN (Uru)	31.10.80
1	Hugo SUAREZ	07.02.82
DEFENDERS		
20	Juan AGUILAR	15.03.87
6	Gustavo CAAMANO (Arg)	23.07.79
23	Luis GUTIERREZ	15.01.85
2	Miguel HOYOS	11.03.81
3	Alejandro MELEAN	16.06.87
19	Angel RIBERA	02.08.85
5	Alejandro SCHIAPPARELLI (Arg)	16.05.80
MIDFIELDERS		
7	Marcelo AGUIRRE (Arg)	25.08.83
10	Jhasmany CAMPOS	10.05.88
14	Perdo CANELLAS	17.09.89
25	Robert HEGUIGORRI	30.09.88
4	Diego Josue HOYOS	29.09.92
15	Ronald REA	27.03.89
8	Fernando SAUCEDO	15.03.90
18	Mauricio SAUCEDO	14.08.85
13	Diego TERRAZAS	23.02.87
21	Joselito VACA	12.08.82
16	Walter VEIZAGA	24.07.88
FORWARDS		
17	Juan ARCE	10.04.85
9	Nicolas FERNANDEZ (Arg)	14.08.89
24	Pedro Luis LOPEZ	01.12.90
11	Alcides PENA	14.01.89
COACH		
	Ariel CUFFARO RUSSO (Arg)	18.03.63

PENAROL (URU)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Fabian CARINI	26.12.79
21	Leandro GELPI	27.02.91
1	Sebastian SOSA	09.08.86
DEFENDERS		
24	Emiliano ALBIN	24.01.89
3	Gerardo ALCOBA	23.11.84
15	Matias CORUJO	08.05.86
4	Alejandro GONZALEZ	23.03.88
2	Yefferson MOREIRA	07.03.91
22	Dario RODRIGUEZ	17.09.74
6	Guillermo RODRIGUEZ	21.03.84
23	Carlos VALDEZ	02.05.83
MIDFIELDERS		
14	Luis AGUIAR	17.11.85
7	Heber COLLAZO	01.11.89
25	Nicolas DOMINGO (Arg)	08.04.85
11	Fabian ESTOYANOFF	27.09.82
5	Nicolas FREITAS	08.06.87
20	Facundo GUICHON	08.02.91
16	Edison TORRES (Par)	04.04.83
FORWARDS		
9	Diego ALONSO	16.04.75
13	Mauro GUEVGEOZIAM	10.05.86
10	Alejandro MARTINUCCIO (Arg)	16.12.87
18	Matias MIER	02.08.90
19	Juan Manuel OLIVERA	14.08.81
8	Antonio PACHECO	11.04.76
17	Jonathan URRETAVIZCAYA	19.03.90
COACH		
	Diego AGUIRRE	13.09.65

SAN LUIS (MEX)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Cesar LOZANO	31.05.77
25	Gerson MARIN	25.02.89
1	Carlos TREJO	20.03.83
DEFENDERS		
17	Daniel ALCANTAR	02.05.76
22	Manuel GARCIA	31.07.88
13	Luis HERNANDEZ	08.11.85
20	Osmar MARES	17.06.87
2	Anibal MATELLAN (Arg)	08.05.77
16	Sergio PONCE	13.08.81
5	Guillermo RANGEL	11.06.89
3	Gabriel ROJO DE LA VEGA	15.10.89
4	Christian SANCHEZ	04.04.89
MIDFIELDERS		
18	Isai ARREDONDO	19.03.83
6	Jaime CORREA	06.08.79
15	Carlos HURTADO	22.01.84
23	Jesus ISIJARA	26.09.89
14	Noe MAYA	01.02.85
8	Juan Carlos MEDINA	22.08.83
7	Ignacio TORRES	25.09.83
FORWARDS		
10	Wilmer AGUIRRE (Per)	10.05.83
24	Othoniel ARCE	08.11.89
9	Michael ARROYO (Ecu)	23.04.87
19	Juan Manuel CAVALLO (Arg)	08.12.81
11	Juan Ezequiel CUEVAS (Arg)	04.06.88
21	Victor LOJERO	17.11.84
COACH		
	Ignacio AMBRIZ	07.02.65

SANTOS (BRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	ARANHA	17.11.80
1	RAFAEL CABRAL	20.05.90
24	VLADIMIR	16.07.89
DEFENDERS		
16	ALEX SANDRO	26.01.91
13	BRUNO AGUIAR	25.03.86
14	BRUNO RODRIGO	12.04.85
22	DANILO	15.07.91
6	DURVAL	11.07.80
2	EDU DRACENA	18.05.81
4	JONATHAN	27.02.86
3	LEO	06.07.75
MIDFIELDERS		
15	ADRIANO	29.05.87
25	ALAN PATRICK	13.05.91
5	AROUCA	11.07.86
7	CHARLES	14.02.85
8	ELANO	14.06.81
10	GANSO	12.10.89
18	POSSEBON	13.02.89
23	ROBSON	10.11.87
FORWARDS		
19	DIOGO	26.05.87
9	KEIRRISON	03.12.88
17	MAIKON LEITE	03.08.88
11	NEYMAR	05.02.92
21	PARA	14.02.86
20	ZE EDUARDO	29.10.87
COACH		
	(vacant)	

UNION ESPANOLA (CHL)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Cristian GUERRA	09.08.94
22	Eduardo LOBOS	30.07.81
1	Rainer WIRTH	25.10.82
DEFENDERS		
3	Francisco ALARCON	25.02.90
13	Leandro DELGADO	15.07.82
6	Giovanny ESPINOZA (Ecu)	12.04.77
16	Esteban GONZALEZ	22.05.82
15	Marco HIDALGO	06.07.82
8	Rodolfo MADRID	14.05.80
19	Rafael OLARRA	26.05.78
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Fernando CORDERO	26.08.87
21	Nahuel DONADEL (Arg)	03.05.91
20	Luis FIGUEROA	14.05.83
2	Braulio LEAL	22.11.81
10	Martin LIGUERA (Uru)	09.11.80
14	Jose PEREZ	22.07.85
5	Diego SCOTTI (Uru)	14.01.77
4	Gonzalo VILLAGRA	17.01.81
FORWARDS		
25	Mario ARAVENA	31.01.85
24	Ramses BUSTOS	13.10.91
7	Raul ESTEVEZ (Arg)	21.01.78
17	Rodrigo GATTAS	02.12.91
18	Kevin HARBOTTLE	08.06.90
23	Oscar JAIME (Arg)	30.01.87
9	Leonardo MONJE	16.03.81
COACH		
	Jose Luis SIERRA	05.12.68

UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA (CHL)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Fabian CERDA	07.02.89
1	Paulo GARCES	02.08.84
23	Cristopher TOSELLI	15.06.88
DEFENDERS		
14	Pablo CORRAL	16.01.92
5	David HENRIQUEZ	12.07.77
16	Hans MARTINEZ	04.01.87
3	Diego OPAZO	02.02.91
24	Alfonso PAROT	15.10.88
4	Adan VERGARA	09.05.81
MIDFIELDERS		
10	Marcelo CANETE (Arg)	16.04.90
25	Tomas COSTA (Arg)	30.06.85
11	Santiago DITTBORN	30.10.92
20	Juan Eduardo ELUCHANS (Arg)	14.04.80
21	Felipe GUTIERREZ	08.10.90
9	Fernando MENESES	20.06.80
13	Milovan MIROSEVIC	20.06.80
8	Jorge ORMENO	14.06.77
6	Francisco SILVA	11.02.86
7	Rodrigo VALENZUELA	27.11.75
FORWARDS		
18	Pablo Ignacio CALANDRIA (Arg)	15.03.82
15	Nicolas CASTILLO	14.02.93
22	Roberto GUTIERREZ	18.04.83
19	Francisco PIZARRO	10.05.89
2	Lucas PRATTO (Arg)	04.06.88
17	Jose Luis VILLANUEVA	05.11.81
COACH		
	Juan Antonio PIZZI (Arg)	07.06.68

UNIVERSIDAD SAN MARTIN (PER)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Leao BUTRON	06.03.77
12	Ricardo FARRO	06.03.85
21	Pedro GALLESE	23.02.90
DEFENDERS		
5	Orlando CONTRERAS	11.06.82
20	Aldo CORZO	20.05.89
15	Guillermo GUIZASOLA	08.02.82
2	Jorge HUAMAN	11.04.77
3	Antony MOLINA	13.08.90
22	Julio Cesar MOREYRA (Arg)	10.08.81
4	Jorge REYES	18.05.81
MIDFIELDERS		
18	Luis ALVAREZ	17.05.90
25	Adan BALBIN	13.10.86
8	Christian CUEVA	23.11.91
19	Carlos FERNANDEZ	01.11.84
7	Walter FRETES (Par)	18.05.82
6	John HINOSTROZA	22.02.80
10	Carlos MARINELLI (Arg)	14.03.82
23	Ronald QUINTEROS (Par)	28.06.85
13	Benjamin UBIERNA	22.11.91
FORWARDS		
11	Ariel ALEMANNO (Arg)	27.09.83
9	Heber ARRIOLA	14.08.80
17	Gianfranco LABARTHE	20.09.84
16	Fernando NADAYA (Arg)	15.09.89
14	Josue RODRIGUEZ	13.05.93
24	Manuel TEJADA	12.01.89
COACH		
	Anibal RUIZ (Uru)	30.12.42

VELEZ SARSFIELD (ARG)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Alan AGUERRE	23.08.90
1	Marcelo BAROVERO	18.02.84
25	German MONTOYA	23.01.83
DEFENDERS		
21	Mariano BITTOLO	24.04.90
4	Ricardo DIAZ	13.03.88
6	Sebastian DOMINGUEZ	29.07.80
13	Emanuel OLIVERA	02.04.90
19	Fernando ORTIZ	25.12.77
3	Emiliano PAPA	19.04.82
2	Fernando TOBIO	18.10.89
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Ricardo ALVAREZ	12.04.88
24	Ivan BELLA	13.09.89
14	Hector CANTEROS	15.03.89
5	Fabian CUBERO	21.12.78
22	Leandro DESABATO	30.03.90
8	Augusto FERNANDEZ	10.04.86
10	Maximiliano MORALEZ	27.02.87
18	David RAMIREZ	18.02.81
17	Franco RAZZOTTI	06.02.85
16	Victor ZAPATA	20.01.79
FORWARDS		
20	Guillermo FRANCO (Mex)	03.11.76
9	Maximiliano GIUSTI	18.02.91
7	Juan Manuel MARTINEZ	25.10.85
15	Ezequiel RESCALDANI	11.06.92
23	Santiago SILVA (Uru)	09.12.80
COACH		
	Ricardo GARECA	10.02.58

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ARGENTINA PRIMERA CLAUSURA 2010-11

ALL BOYS

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Nicolas CAMBIASSO	02.03.78
19	Lucas DI GRAZIA	03.06.86
33	Matias GIORDANO	11.09.79
DEFENDERS		
30	Diego AYALA (Par)	09.01.90
2	Mariano BRAU	10.07.82
13	Carlos CASTEGLIONE	09.05.80
25	Eduardo DOMINGUEZ	01.09.78
21	Carlos MADEO	31.07.81
3	Armando PANCERI	14.03.85
28	Mauricio PROL	28.01.89
20	Matias RUDLER	25.04.88
6	Carlos SOTO	20.01.84
4	Cristian VELLA	06.03.78
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Hugo BARRIENTOS	03.01.77
11	Sebastian GRAZZINI	25.01.81
16	Victor LOPEZ	20.04.87
15	Emanuel PEREA	08.04.85
29	Lucas RIMOLDI	07.08.80
22	Juan Pablo RODRIGUEZ (Uru)	14.06.82
8	Fernando SANCHEZ	20.01.76
24	Facundo TESSORO	13.06.86
FORWARDS		
36	Gustavo BARTELT	02.09.74
14	Sebastian EREROS	14.04.85
23	Cristian FABBIANI	03.09.83
32	Emmanuel GIGLIOTTI	20.05.87
9	Mauro MATOS	06.08.82
37	Ariel ORTEGA	04.03.74
18	Enry RUI	24.08.90
17	Matias SAAD	16.06.80
7	Agustin TORASSA	20.10.88
10	Ariel ZARATE	13.07.73
COACH		
	Jose Santos ROMERO	03.11.53

ARGENTINOS JUNIORS

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Juan CARRERA	10.05.81
20	Nicolas NAVARRO	25.03.85
1	Luis OJEDA	21.03.90
DEFENDERS		
13	Nicolas BERARDO	26.07.90
6	Sergio ESCUDERO	12.04.83
2	Julian FERNANDEZ	18.07.89
5	Santiago GENTILETTI	09.01.85
25	Federico PISTONE	13.06.90
3	Gonzalo PROSPERI	03.06.85
27	Lucas RODRIGUEZ	27.09.93
17	Juan SABIA	17.12.81
4	Miguel TORREN	12.08.88
MIDFIELDERS		
24	German BASUALDO	07.03.84
7	Mauro BOGADO	31.05.85
18	Lionel COUDANNES	09.05.84
29	Rodrigo DIAZ PONCE	30.08.92
23	Emilio HERNANDEZ (Chl)	14.09.84
16	Pablo HERNANDEZ	24.10.86
14	Matias LABA	11.12.91
8	Juan MERCIER	02.02.80
19	Dario OCAMPO	21.06.86
28	Cristian SANCHEZ PRETTE	10.05.85
FORWARDS		
31	Leandro BARRERA	22.02.91
11	Nicolas BLANDI	13.01.90
22	Franco NIELL	22.05.83
10	Gustavo OBERMAN	25.03.85
26	Ciro RIUS	27.10.88
30	Gonzalo RODRIGUEZ	10.05.91
15	Andres ROMERO	21.12.89
21	Santiago SALCEDO	06.09.81
9	Gonzalo VARGAS (Uru)	22.09.81
COACH		
	Pedro TROGLIO	28.07.65

ARSENAL

GOALKEEPERS		
17	Cristian CAMPESTRINI	16.06.80
1	Catriel ORCELLET	10.05.78
DEFENDERS		
6	Pablo AGUILAR (Par)	02.04.87
4	Ignacio BOGGINO	22.02.86
16	Cristian CEPEDA	05.02.91
3	Juan KRUPOVIESA	16.04.79
2	Lisandro LOPEZ	01.09.89
13	Gonzalo MENENDEZ	16.12.92
28	Hugo NERVO	06.01.91
MIDFIELDERS		
14	Marcos AGUIRRE	30.03.84
23	Cristian ALVAREZ	09.01.78
8	Juan Pablo CAFFA	30.09.84
19	Gonzalo CHOY (Uru)	10.11.81
20	Gaston ESMERADO	08.02.78
21	Adrian GONZALEZ	20.11.76
30	Ivan MARCONE	03.06.90
5	Jorge ORTIZ	20.06.84
15	Damian PEREZ	22.12.88
22	Sergio SENA	25.08.82
31	Facundo SILVA	19.01.91
FORWARDS		
11	Matias ALUSTIZA	31.05.84
7	Andres FRANZOIA	21.10.85
10	Luciano LEGUIZAMON	01.07.82
27	Franco MENDOZA	18.08.81
32	Claudio MOSCA	02.04.91
9	Ivan OBOLO	28.09.81
25	Matias SIERRA	19.02.90
COACH		
	Gustavo ALFARO	14.08.62

BANFIELD

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Enrique BOLOGNA	13.02.82
22	Pablo SANTILLO	07.03.80
DEFENDERS		
4	Julio BARRAZA	04.03.80
6	Marcelo BUSTAMANTE	17.02.80
15	Alejandro DELFINO	18.09.89
21	Jose DEVACA (Par)	18.09.82
3	Mauro DOS SANTOS	07.07.89
24	Santiago LADINO	21.10.80
2	Victor LOPEZ	19.12.78
14	Favio SEGOVIA	12.01.89
31	Nicolas TAGLIAFICO	31.08.92
26	Gustavo TOLEDO	19.09.89
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Maximiliano BUSTOS	05.01.82
8	Marcelo CARRUSCA	01.09.83
10	Diego DE SOUZA (Uru)	14.05.84
34	Jonatan GOMEZ	21.12.89
9	Gabriel MENDEZ	08.05.88
13	Hernan PEREYRA	21.02.90
23	Emmanuel PIO	04.11.88
20	Marcelo QUINTEROS	23.12.76
7	Ariel ROSADA	11.04.78
16	Federico SARDELLA	16.04.88
19	Nahuel YERI	25.09.91
FORWARDS		
11	Jorge ACHUCARRO (Par)	06.11.81
18	Facundo FERREYRA	14.03.91
12	Cristian GARCIA	29.03.88
17	Sebastian ROMERO	27.04.78
30	Emilio ZELAYA	30.07.87
COACH		
	Sebastian MENDEZ	04.07.77

BOCA JUNIORS

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Javier GARCIA	29.01.87
29	Cristian LUCHETTI	26.06.78
12	Maximiliano SCAPPARONI	13.01.89
DEFENDERS		
31	David ACHUCARRO	05.01.91
-	Alejandro ALFONSO	11.09.89
4	Jose Maria CALVO	15.07.81
6	Matias CARUZZO	15.08.84
2	Christian CELLAY	05.09.81
-	Hugo IBARRA	01.04.74
13	Juan INSAURRALDE	03.10.84
-	LUIZ ALBERTO (Bra)	01.12.77
18	Fabian MONZON	13.04.87
3	Clemente RODRIGUEZ	31.07.81
19	Enzo RUIZ	20.06.89
-	Santiago VILLAFANE	19.05.88
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Sebastian BATTAGLIA	08.11.80
21	Cristian CHAVEZ	16.06.86
15	Nicolas COLAZO	08.07.90
22	Cristian ERBES	06.01.90
11	Walter ERVITI	12.07.80
20	Leandro PAREDES	29.06.94
10	Juan Roman RIQUELME	24.06.78
8	Diego RIVERO	11.08.81
35	Juan SANCHEZ MINO	01.01.90
16	Leandro SOMOZA	26.01.81
FORWARDS		
24	Sergio ARAUJO	28.01.92
32	Orlando GAONA LUGO (Par)	25.07.90
7	Pablo MOUCHE	11.10.87
14	Ricardo NOIR	26.02.87
9	Martin PALERMO	07.11.73
27	Lucas VIATRI	29.03.87
COACH		
	Julio Cesar FALCIONI	20.07.56

COLON

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Andres BAILO	06.09.88
21	Marcos DIAZ	05.02.86
1	Diego POZO	16.02.78
DEFENDERS		
23	Mauricio ARIAS	10.10.90
3	Maximiliano CAIRE	12.07.88
13	Salustiano CANDIA (Par)	08.06.83
46	Ariel GARCE	14.07.79
33	Marcelo GOUX	21.09.75
2	Humberto MENDOZA (Col)	02.10.84
4	Ismael QUILEZ	16.11.89
19	Juan Leandro QUIROGA	20.04.82
6	Ronald RALDES (Bol)	20.04.81
MIDFIELDS		
30	Lucas ACOSTA	26.01.88
8	Mauro BELLONE	03.07.90
10	Damian DIAZ	01.05.86
11	Ricardo GOMEZ	23.10.81
28	Cristian LEDESMA	29.11.78
16	Ivan MORENO Y FABIANESI (Spa)	04.06.79
26	Lucas MUGNI	12.01.92
5	Sebastian PREDIGER	04.09.86
29	Alfredo RAMIREZ	19.02.87
15	Facundo SANCHEZ	07.03.90
17	Santiago SOTO	23.01.90
FORWARDS		
14	German CANO	02.02.88
25	Martin COMACHI	22.10.91
18	Facundo CURUCHET	21.01.90
20	Esteban FUERTES	26.12.72
7	Federico HIGUAIN	25.10.84
9	Joaquin LARRIVEY	20.08.84
22	German LESMAN	08.09.90
-	Edgar ZARACHO (Par)	29.11.89
COACH		
	Fernando GAMBOA	28.10.70

ESTUDIANTES

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Agustin ORION	26.06.81
25	Agustin SILVA	28.06.89
12	Cesar TABORDA	23.01.84
DEFENDERS		
24	Nelson BENITEZ	24.05.84
-	Leonardo DELGADO	09.09.91
2	Leandro DESABATO	24.01.79
17	Federico FERNANDEZ	21.02.89
4	Raul IBERBIA	25.12.89
-	Emanuel LOPEZ	11.01.90
14	Gabriel MERCADO	18.03.87
16	German RE	02.11.81
3	Facundo RONCAGLIA	10.02.87
-	Matias SARULYTE	13.03.89
MIDFIELDS		
6	Pablo BARRIENTOS	17.01.85
23	Leandro BENITEZ	05.04.81
-	Roberto BIRGE	15.01.89
22	Rodrigo BRANA	07.03.79
31	Hector CARDOZO	05.08.91
13	Michael HOYOS	02.08.91
29	Leonardo JARA	20.05.91
26	Gabriel PENALBA	23.09.84
7	Enzo PEREZ	22.02.86
5	Matias SANCHEZ	18.08.87
15	Dario STEFANATTO	03.04.85
11	Juan Sebastian VERON	09.03.75
FORWARDS		
21	Carlos AUZQUI	16.09.91
10	Gaston FERNANDEZ	12.10.83
20	Leandro GONZALEZ	14.10.85
9	Hernan Rodrigo LOPEZ (Uru)	21.01.78
18	Maximiliano NUNEZ	17.09.86
8	Juan Pablo PEREYRA	30.05.84
COACH		
	Eduardo BERIZZO	13.11.69

GIMNASIA

GOALKEEPERS		
23	Fernando MONETTI	21.02.89
12	Fernando PELLEGRINO	31.03.86
1	Gaston SESSA	15.04.73
DEFENDERS		
6	Ariel AGUERO	18.08.80
13	Raul Alberto ALBORNOZ	20.03.89
26	Oliver BENITEZ	07.06.91
29	Pablo FONTANELLO	26.09.84
-	Patricio GRAFF	18.11.75
-	Miguel Angel JUAREZ	10.01.87
2	Abel MASUERO	06.04.88
4	Ricardo MOREIRA	23.02.82
-	Federico QUIROGA	13.10.89
-	Boris RIELOFF (Chl)	08.01.84
27	Leandro SAPETTI	30.01.89
MIDFIELDERS		
8	Luciano AUED	01.03.87
22	Alejandro CAPURRO	31.10.80
15	Milton CASCO	11.04.88
11	Lucas CASTRO	09.04.89
25	Hernan ENCINA	03.11.82
17	Alejandro FREZZOTTI	15.02.84
28	Cesar GONZALEZ (Ven)	01.10.82
21	Emiliano MENDEZ	15.02.89
5	Fabian RINAUDO	15.05.87
FORWARDS		
7	Guillermo BARROS SCHELOTTO	04.05.73
9	Jorge CORDOBA	12.12.87
30	Claudio GRAF	31.01.76
10	Juan NEIRA	21.02.89
20	German PACHECO	19.05.91
31	Antonio ROJANO	27.04.91
34	Joaquin ROMEA	03.03.93
18	Jose VIZCARRA	08.08.84
COACH		
	Angel CAPPA	06.09.46

GODOY CRUZ

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Nelson IBANEZ	13.01.80
12	Sebastian TORRICO	22.02.80
DEFENDERS		
13	Victor AGUILERA	11.06.89
22	Lucas CEBALLOS	03.01.87
32	Cristian CUEVAS	28.03.88
6	Jorge CURBELO (Uru)	21.12.81
20	Emir FACCIOLI	05.08.89
21	Zelmar GARCIA	03.02.87
3	Roberto RUSSO	06.06.82
-	Dario SALOMON	04.10.83
25	Nicolas SANCHEZ	04.02.86
2	Leonardo SIGALI	29.05.87
30	German VOBORIL	05.05.87
MIDFIELDERS		
27	Alejandro CAMARGO	12.06.89
14	Israel DAMONTE	06.01.82
31	Mariano DONDA	25.03.82
16	Juan Carlos FALCON	19.11.79
28	Gabriel MOYANO	28.07.92
5	Nicolas OLMEDO	10.03.83
23	Ariel ROJAS	16.01.86
4	Carlos SANCHEZ (Uru)	02.12.84
24	Sergio SANCHEZ	24.01.88
17	Adrian TORRES	31.10.89
8	Diego VILLAR	25.04.82
FORWARDS		
19	Pablo MIRANDA	14.12.84
11	Alvaro NAVARRO (Uru)	28.01.85
7	Fabricio NUNEZ (Uru)	04.11.85
29	Jorge PINEIRO DA SILVA	24.09.87
18	Ruben RAMIREZ	17.10.82
9	Rodrigo SALINAS	04.07.86
COACH		
	Jorge DA SILVA (Uru)	11.12.61

HURACAN

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Lucas CALVINO	08.11.84
1	Esteban DANERI	21.05.91
22	Gaston MONZON	13.05.87
DEFENDERS		
33	Nicolas AGUIRRE	12.04.91
32	David ANGELOFF	18.02.91
26	Bruno BILOTTI	04.07.91
15	Kevin CURA	03.10.90
6	Ezequiel FILIPETTO	09.12.87
31	Rodrigo LEMOS	08.03.91
36	Luciano OSPINA	18.02.91
14	Agustin PENA (Uru)	08.03.89
13	Carlos QUINTANA	11.02.88
2	Facundo QUIROGA	10.11.78
4	Leonardo VILLAN	12.02.92
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Rodrigo BATTAGLIA	12.07.91
19	Marcos BRITEZ OJEDA	22.05.86
-	Juan Carlos CARRIZO	03.06.87
-	Francisco HERNANDEZ	14.08.89
17	Gaston MACHIN	23.02.83
7	Cristian MAIDANA	24.01.87
8	Cesar MONTIGLIO	30.01.84
10	Angel MORALES	14.06.75
3	Matias QUIROGA	25.01.86
24	Dario SOPLAN	01.02.90
FORWARDS		
25	Javier CAMPORA	07.01.80
9	Claudio GUERRA	05.08.83
-	Federico LAURITO	18.05.90
18	Emiliano LENCINA	18.02.89
-	Alejandro QUINTANA	20.02.92
-	Mariano TORRES	19.05.87
11	Rolando ZARATE	06.08.78
COACH		
	Roberto POMPEI	14.03.70

INDEPENDIENTE

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Fabian ASSMANN	23.03.86
12	Adrian GABBARINI	10.10.85
1	Hilario NAVARRO	14.11.80
DEFENDERS		
26	Ignacio BARCIA	15.06.89
36	Samuel CACERES ARZA	20.03.89
24	Leonel GALEANO	02.08.91
27	Lucas KRUSPZKY	06.04.92
3	Lucas MAREQUE	12.01.83
25	Carlos MATHEU	13.05.85
6	Eduardo TUZZIO	31.07.74
28	Gabriel VALLES	03.05.86
2	Julian VELAZQUEZ	23.10.90
4	Maximiliano VELAZQUEZ	12.09.80
13	Ivan VELEZ (Col)	16.08.84
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Roberto BATTION	01.03.82
32	Walter BUSSE	03.03.87
16	Nicolas CABRERA	05.06.84
35	Nicolas DELMONTE	10.05.89
8	Hernan FREDES	27.03.87
15	Fernando GODOY	01.05.90
19	Leandro GRACIAN	06.08.82
23	Federico MANCUELLO	26.03.89
18	Nicolas MARTINEZ	25.09.87
7	Cristian PELLERANO	01.02.82
22	Ivan PEREZ	23.05.90
10	Patricio RODRIGUEZ	04.05.90
FORWARDS		
20	Jairo CASTILLO (Col)	17.11.77
9	Matias DEFEDERICO	23.08.89
34	Brian NIEVA	18.03.90
17	Facundo PARRA	15.06.85
11	Andres SILVERA	14.03.77
COACH		
Antonio MOHAMED		02.04.70

LANUS

GOALKEEPERS		
13	Esteban ANDRADA	26.01.89
31	Mauricio CARANTA	31.07.78
1	Agustin MARCHESIN	16.03.88
DEFENDERS		
4	Carlos ARAUJO	19.11.81
25	Carlos ARCE	04.02.85
3	Luciano BALBI	04.04.89
6	Rodrigo ERRAMUSPE	03.05.90
2	Paolo GOLTZ	12.05.85
17	Santiago HOYOS	03.06.82
24	Carlos IZQUIERDOZ	03.11.88
20	Hernan LOPES	23.03.91
34	Maximiliano LUGO	04.12.89
MIDFIELDERS		
16	Mauro CAMORANESI (Ita)	04.10.76
11	Cesar CARRANZA	16.08.80
22	Javier CARRASCO	14.02.89
32	Diego GONZALEZ	09.02.88
8	Eduardo LEDESMA (Par)	07.08.85
5	Agustin PELLETIERI	17.05.82
-	Adrian PERALTA	08.05.82
19	Guido PIZARRO	26.02.90
33	Diego VALERI	01.05.86
-	Mario ZANINOVICH	20.03.87
FORWARDS		
9	Gonzalo CASTILLEJOS	05.03.86
18	Leandro DIAZ	06.06.92
7	Diego LAGOS	03.05.86
10	Mario REGUEIRO (Uru)	09.09.78
27	Silvio ROMERO	27.02.88
COACH		
Gabriel SCHURRER		16.08.71

NEWELL'S OLD BOYS

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Nahuel GUZMAN	10.08.86
12	Lucas HOYOS	29.04.89
22	Sebastian PERATTA	01.11.76
DEFENDERS		
3	Gabriel CICHERO (Ven)	25.04.84
26	Cristian DIAZ	19.02.90
39	Ignacio FIDELEFF	04.07.89
4	Fabricio FUENTES	13.10.76
13	Cristian LEMA	24.03.90
6	Rolando SCHIAVI	18.01.73
8	Luciano VELLA	13.04.81
MIDFIELDERS		
7	Lucas BERNARDI	27.09.77
25	Nestor CAMACHO (Par)	15.10.87
-	Alejandro CASCIO	23.06.88
17	Franco DOLCI	01.01.84
16	Marcelo ESTIGARRIBIA (Par)	21.09.87
24	Lorenzo FARAVELLI	29.03.93
5	Diego MATEO	07.08.78
14	Mauricio SPERDUTTI	16.02.86
28	Martin TONSO	19.10.89
30	Carlos VACA	08.05.88
21	Leonel VANGIONI	05.05.87
33	Raul VILLALBA	09.02.89
FORWARDS		
20	Sergio ALMIRON	20.09.85
34	Claudio BIELER	01.03.84
15	Juan Manuel COBELLI	27.02.88
31	Emanuel DENING	30.11.89
-	Federico FALCONE	21.02.90
18	Luis RODRIGUEZ	01.01.85
9	Sebastian TABORDA (Uru)	22.05.81
COACH		
Roberto SENSINI		12.10.66

OLIMPO

GOALKEEPERS		
31	Gabriel ARIAS	13.09.87
27	Matias IBANEZ	16.12.86
1	Laureano TOMBOLINI	13.08.76
12	Ezequiel VIOLA	01.09.87
DEFENDERS		
6	Nicolas BIANCHI ARCE	28.01.87
4	Eduardo CASAIS	19.03.85
20	Federico DOMINGUEZ	13.08.76
35	Diego FLAMENCO	21.02.87
15	Pablo JEREZ	26.07.83
2	Marcelo MOSSET	29.09.81
14	Diego REYNOSO	01.11.81
-	Lucas RODRIGUEZ PAGANO	22.04.80
22	Juan TEJERA (Uru)	26.07.83
3	Cristian VILLANUEVA	25.12.83
MIDFIELDERS		
-	Martin AGUIRRE	14.09.81
19	Damian BICCICONTTI	20.05.87
5	Roberto BRUM (Uru)	05.07.83
11	Juan Manuel COBO	26.11.84
18	Diego GALVAN	19.03.82
23	Marcelo RICCI	04.08.86
10	Martin ROLLE	02.02.85
-	Edgar SCALCO	27.03.87
8	Juan Pablo SCHEFER	16.11.85
7	David VEGA	17.11.80
FORWARDS		
9	Nestor BAREIRO (Par)	11.12.84
-	Alejandro DELORTE	02.06.78
30	Julio FURCH	29.07.89
29	Ezequiel MAGGIOLO	15.06.77
32	Emerson PANIGUTTI	13.02.76
17	Carlos SALOM	03.03.87
COACH		
Omar DE FELIPPE		03.04.62

QUILMES

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Hernan GALINDEZ	30.03.87
25	Diego MORALES	16.04.83
1	Emanuel TRIPODI	08.01.81
DEFENDERS		
3	Ariel BROGGI	15.01.83
32	Claudio CORVALAN	23.03.89
33	Matias DI GREGORIO	04.06.86
6	Fabricio FONTANINI	30.03.90
31	Danilo GERLO	07.03.79
17	Facundo GOMEZ	08.10.88
22	Hernan GRANA	12.04.85
24	Damian LEYES	14.01.86
14	Sebastian MARTINEZ (Uru)	11.04.83
2	Martin QUILES	31.03.86
MIDFIELDERS		
20	Miguel CANEO	17.03.83
18	Francisco CERRO	09.02.88
8	Leandro CORONEL	10.02.88
27	Arnaldo GONZALEZ	13.05.89
-	Santiago HIRSIG	12.01.78
23	Enzo KALINSKI	10.03.87
11	Gervasio NUNEZ	29.01.88
-	Oscar Javier MORALES	29.03.75
10	Santiago RAYMONDA	03.04.79
7	Gustavo VARELA (Uru)	14.05.78
FORWARDS		
21	Martin CAUTERUCCIO (Uru)	14.04.87
26	Pablo GARNIER	26.02.81
9	Juan Jose MORALES	13.05.82
29	Enrique NARVAY	26.01.90
28	Bernardo ROMEO	10.09.77
19	Diego TORRES	03.07.82
COACH		
Ricardo Caruso LOMBARDI		10.02.62

RACING

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Jorge DE OLIVERA	21.08.82
12	Mauro DOBLER	03.01.83
1	Roberto FERNANDEZ (Par)	29.03.88
DEFENDERS		
22	Lucas AVELDANO	19.07.85
28	Marcos CACERES (Par)	05.05.86
6	Matias CAHAIS	24.12.87
31	Gonzalo GARCIA	06.02.87
23	Braian LLUY	25.04.89
34	Matias MARTINEZ	24.03.88
4	Ivan PILLUD	24.04.86
3	Nicolas SAINZ	16.06.89
MIDFIELDERS		
25	Lucas LICHT	06.04.81
30	Adrian LUCERO	16.08.84
10	Giovanni MORENO (Col)	01.07.86
17	Raul Fernando POCLABA	23.01.90
16	Juan Cruz RESPUELA	26.06.91
-	Mario SOSA	04.06.86
18	Patricio TORANZO	19.03.82
32	Martin WAGNER	15.06.85
5	Claudio YACOB	18.07.87
15	Bruno ZUCULINI	02.04.93
19	Franco ZUCULINI	05.09.90
FORWARDS		
24	Ignacio COLOMBINI	12.05.92
8	Luis BENITEZ	14.02.85
11	Luis FARINA	20.04.91
-	Teofilo GUTIERREZ (Col)	17.05.85
9	Gabriel HAUCHE	27.11.86
7	Pablo LUGUERCIO	10.03.82
-	Santiago MALANO	29.01.87
20	Valentin VIOLA	28.08.91
COACH		
Miguel Angel RUSSO		09.04.56

RIVER PLATE

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Juan Pablo CARRIZO	06.05.84
18	Leandro CHICHIZOLA	27.03.90
17	Daniel VEGA	03.06.84
DEFENDERS		
31	Luciano ABECASIS	04.06.90
3	Carlos ARANO	06.05.80
26	Maximiliano CORONEL	28.04.89
13	Juan Manuel DIAZ (Uru)	28.10.87
21	Alejandro ESPINOZA	16.12.92
4	Pablo FERRARI	04.01.82
2	Alexis FERRERO	13.03.79
16	Jose FUNES MORI	05.03.91
6	Jonatan MAIDANA	29.04.85
28	German PEZZELLA	27.06.91
19	Adalberto ROMAN (Par)	11.04.87
MIDFIELDS		
38	Matias ABELAIRAS	18.06.85
5	Walter ACEVEDO	16.02.86
15	Facundo AFFRANCHINO	09.02.90
25	Matias ALMEYDA	21.12.73
23	Josepmir BALLON (Per)	21.03.88
14	Adrian CIRIGLIANO	24.01.92
29	Mauro DIAZ	10.03.91
10	Erik LAMELA	25.03.92
20	Manuel LANZINI	15.02.93
37	Roberto PEREYRA	07.01.91
FORWARDS		
8	Fabian BORDAGARAY	15.02.87
22	Gustavo BOU	18.02.90
30	Diego BUONANOTTE	19.04.88
11	Leandro CARUSO	14.07.81
9	Rogelio FUNES MORI	05.03.91
7	Mariano PAVONE	27.05.82
24	Daniel VILLALVA BARRIOS	06.07.92
COACH		
Juan Jose LOPEZ		31.10.50

SAN LORENZO

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Damian ALBIL	09.12.79
-	Bruno CENTENO	08.08.88
22	Pablo MIGLIORE	27.01.82
DEFENDERS		
-	Alan ACIAR	26.02.88
6	Jonathan BOTTINELLI	14.09.84
20	Giancarlo CARMONA (Per)	12.10.85
32	Jonathan FERRARI	08.05.87
29	Diego HERNER	31.07.83
4	Sebastian LUNA	24.12.87
27	Jose Luis PALOMINO	05.01.90
13	Diego PLACENTE	27.07.77
11	Aureliano TORRES (Par)	16.06.82
2	Cristian TULA	28.01.78
MIDFIELDERS		
-	Nicolas BERTOCCHI	09.06.89
34	Rafael CABRERA	30.07.90
14	Matias GIMENEZ	23.12.84
33	Sebastian GONZALEZ	04.03.92
7	Juan MENSEGUEZ	22.06.83
8	Nestor ORTIGOZA (Par)	07.10.84
21	Guillermo PEREYRA	20.02.80
-	Santiago PRIM	11.05.90
23	Salvador REYNOSO	12.10.87
10	Leandro ROMAGNOLI	17.03.81
5	Juan Manuel TORRES	20.06.85
FORWARDS		
26	Carlos BENITEZ	10.04.90
38	Nahuel DE VICO	15.08.90
19	Juan Manuel SALGUEIRO (Uru)	03.04.83
-	Carlos Emmanuel TORRES	24.06.92
9	Pablo VELAZQUEZ (Par)	12.03.87
COACH		
Ramon DIAZ		29.08.59

WÜRZBURG ???

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Luis ARDENTE	17.09.81
1	Daniel ISLAS	19.02.79
DEFENDERS		
3	Juan Carlos BLENGIO	26.06.80
33	Pablo CACERES (Uru)	22.04.85
21	Mariano ECHEVERRIA	27.05.81
23	Norberto PAPARATTO	03.01.84
25	Mariano PERNIA (Spa)	04.05.77
-	Carlos RICCI	03.07.89
24	Andres RODALES (Uru)	09.07.87
4	Renzo VERA	01.06.83
MIDFIELDERS		
30	Jonathan BLANCO	29.04.87
9	Ruben BOTTA	31.01.90
-	Gerardo BRITEZ	16.05.88
31	Cristian BRITOS (URU)	07.09.90
5	Diego CASTANO	08.06.79
8	Martin GALMARINI	28.02.82
32	Esteban GONZALEZ	16.09.78
16	Kevin ITABEL	20.08.93
11	Ramiro LEONE	01.06.77
6	Roman MARTINEZ	27.03.83
26	Lucas MENOSSI	11.07.92
20	Mariano PASINI	19.10.76
FORWARDS		
29	Leonel ALTOBELLI	20.07.86
-	Cristian BARDARO	11.08.77
19	Martin GOMEZ	26.01.83
-	Franco LANARO	18.01.89
10	Diego MORALES	29.11.86
27	Lucas SIMON	01.08.86
22	Denis STRACQUALURSI	20.10.87
17	Fernando TELECHEA	06.10.81
COACH		
Rodolfo ARRUABARRENA		20.07.75

WOLFSBURGFIELD

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Marcelo BAROVERO	18.02.84
25	German MONTOYA	23.01.83
DEFENDERS		
21	Mariano BITTOLO	24.04.90
4	Gaston DIAZ	13.03.88
6	Sebastian DOMINGUEZ	29.07.80
-	Juan IURINO	09.06.90
13	Emanuel OLIVERA	02.04.90
19	Fernando ORTIZ	25.12.77
3	Emiliano PAPA	19.04.82
27	Gino PERUZZI	09.06.92
-	Guillermo PFUND	30.05.89
2	Fernando TOBIO	18.10.89
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Ricardo ALVAREZ	12.04.88
24	Ivan BELLA	13.09.89
14	Hector CANTEROS	15.03.89
-	Luciano CIGNO	29.02.88
5	Fabian CUBERO	21.12.78
28	Leandro DESABATO	30.03.90
8	Augusto FERNANDEZ	10.04.86
10	Maximiliano MORALEZ	27.02.87
18	David RAMIREZ	18.02.81
17	Franco RAZZOTTI	06.02.85
16	Victor ZAPATA	20.01.79
FORWARDS		
22	Jorge CORREA	16.10.93
20	Guillermo FRANCO (Mex)	03.11.76
9	Maximiliano GIUSTI	18.02.91
-	Andres GUZMAN	13.03.88
7	Juan Manuel MARTINEZ	25.10.85
15	Ezequiel RESCALDANI	11.06.92
23	Santiago SILVA (Uru)	09.12.80
COACH		
Ricardo GARECA		10.02.58

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THE GREAT TEAMS

Bayern Munich 1974

The first German team to win the European Cup, they were the backbone of the West Germany side that were European and world champions

Heysel happiness... Bayern celebrate

Ajax had been the leading club side of the early 1970s, winning three consecutive European Cups, but the departure of Johan Cruyff to Barcelona in 1973 marked a shift in power away from Amsterdam and towards southern Germany.

Six Bayern players – Sepp Maier, Paul Breitner, Franz Beckenbauer, Georg Schwarzenbeck, Uli Hoeness and Gerd Muller – formed the core of the West Germany side that won the 1972 European Championship and the 1974 World Cup, and in 1974 Bayern became the first side to win a hat-trick of successive Bundesliga titles.

Bayern had recently moved into Munich's new Olympiastadion – with attendances averaging 46,000 – and, with Beckenbauer at the peak of his powers, they won the first of three successive European Cups in May 1974, beating Atletico Madrid 4-0 in Brussels, in a replay that was played two days after a 1-1 draw in the same Heysel Stadium.

Bayern leaned heavily on the principles of "total football" and, in an interview with *World Soccer* in December 1973, coach Udo Lattek explained: "During the 1966 World Cup, we realised that the kind of defensive game – which for some years had been stifling football – was on the way out. So we decided to adopt a policy based purely on attack." WS

THE FIRST XI

Sepp Maier
Goalkeeper
Renowned shot-stopper who spent his entire professional career at Bayern.

Johnny Hansen
Right-back
Denmark international who joined Bayern from Nurnberg in 1970 and won three European Cups.

Franz Beckenbauer
Libero
Club captain, *Der Kaiser* was at the heart of everything Bayern achieved in this era.

Georg Schwarzenbeck
Central defender
West Germany international who started out as a left-back before switching to the centre.

Paul Breitner
Left-back
Enigmatic, Afro-haired Marxist intellectual. Later joined Real Madrid. Now an outspoken pundit.

Conny Torstensson
Midfielder
Sweden international who signed after impressing for Atvidaberg in the 1973-74 European Cup.

Rainer Zobel
Midfielder
Joined from Hannover in 1970. Now a coach with a peripatetic CV in Africa and the Middle East.

Franz Roth
Midfielder
Tough, goalscoring midfielder who spent his whole playing career at Bayern.

Jupp Kapellmann
Midfielder
Signed from Koln for a then-German record of £134,000. Now a doctor in sports medicine.

Uli Hoeness
Forward
Retired due to injury at 27 and went on to become Bayern general manager and is now club president.

Gerd Muller
Forward
Der Bomber was one of the most prolific strikers in the history of European football.

THE COACH AND HIS TEAM

Udo Lattek
Handed the coach's role at Bayern in 1970 on Beckenbauer's recommendation. Had been a centre-forward for second-division Osnabruck before dropping into defence and then taking a coaching post with the German FA. Later coached Monchengladbach, Barcelona and Dortmund. Now a TV pundit.

The formation
"I don't see why any players should specialise in a certain role," Lattek told *World Soccer* in 1973. "Defenders should know how to attack and vice-versa. Our tactics meant we had to not only employ orthodox wingers but also old-fashioned goal-poachers.

"Every player, excluding the goalkeeper, should possess ball-playing skills."

Beckenbauer was the hugely influential libero, Kapellmann provided energy in midfield, and in attack Hoeness was the clever foil to marksman Muller.

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